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(18) OACSFOR (19) OT-RD-66X014

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
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IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M)

11 14 Mar 67 FOR OT

21 March 1967

AD387620

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters,
Operation Atlanta, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (U) (8)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

(9) Combat after action rept.

12 61p.

1. Forwarded as inclosure is a Combat After Action Report, Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Operation Atlanta (20 October 1966 - 8 December 1966). Information contained in this report should be reviewed and evaluated by CDC in accordance with paragraph 6f of AR 1-19 and by CONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d of AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to the Commandants of the Service Schools to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

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Kenneth G. Wickham

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11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

COMBAT OPERATIONS
AFTER ACTION REPORT



OPERATION ATLANTA
20 OCTOBER 1966 - 8 DECEMBER 1966

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HEADQUARTERS
11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT
APO San Francisco 96257

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION ATLANTA

1. (U) REFERENCES:

- a. LOI 6-66, Headquarters, II F Force V, 27 September 1966.
- b. OPRD 09-66 (Operation ATLANTA), Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 6 September 1966.
- c. Map Series RVN, 1:50,000-6343I, 6443I, 6443IV, 6443II, 6443III, 6444II, 6543III, 6543IV, 6442I, 6442II, 6442III, 6442IV, 6544III, 6544IV.

2. (U) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: 11th Armored Cavalry Operation ATLANTA Search and Clear, Base Camp Security, and ROADRUNNER.

3. (U) DATES OF OPERATION: 200230H October - 082400H December 1966.

4. (C) GENERAL: On 27 September 1966, II Field Force Vietnam directed the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment to secure a base camp area in the vicinity of YS 4296 to clear and secure highways and lines of communications in portions of Bien Hoa, Long Khanh and Phuoc Tuy Provinces. Execution of the mission was initiated under the code name Operation ATLANTA. The operation commenced on 20 October 1966. Initially the operation was confined to the securing of National Highway 1 from BIEN HOA to XUAN LOC and a portion of Interprovincial Route 2 to the area of the new base camp. Concurrently, security would be provided for the engineer work parties involved in the clearing and preparation of the area for occupancy by the Regiment in the latter part of November. A few days after the operation started the 1st Squadron and engineer units were joined by the 2nd Squadron which organized and operated out of a combat base in the Ong Que rubber plantation (YS 3999) for almost a month. The Regiment's general area of operation is depicted in Annex E. Initially this area of operation was divided into 3 areas as shown on the inclosed map. Later the general area was expanded to include 5 areas.

While the 1st and 2nd Squadrons were operating out of their combat bases in the XUAN LOC area, the 3rd Squadron was securing the Regimental Staging Area in LONG BINH and providing security for the BIEN HOA - LONG BINH area (Operations UNIONTOWN and MARSHALLTOWN). In addition to providing security, the 3rd Squadron conducted aggressive patrolling activities and provided artillery fire support for the DONG MAI sensitive area. By the end of the first week in November the command elements of the Regiment were operating out of the base camp area to be followed in the next 4 weeks by the remaining headquarters elements and the 3rd Squadron.

The Regiment continually demonstrated its versatility and maneuverability throughout the operation. It was not uncommon to find the squadrons operating on three independent missions covering terrain from LAI KHE (Operation ATTLEBORO) to the northern most limits of the 1st Australian Task Force TACR as shown in Annex E. The Blackhorse Regiment remained constantly on the alert ready to exploit its tremendous firepower and inherent crosscountry mobility.

a. The reporting officer of this report is Colonel William W. Cobb, Commanding Officer, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

b. Task Organization. Control of the operation was exercised by Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, operating initially out of a tactical command post at LONG BINH which later moved to the base camp area. The initial task organization is indicated below. Due to the duration of the operation and the additional requirements placed on the Regiment, frequent changes in task organization were necessary and are shown as they occurred in paragraph 8, Estimation. Commanders are shown in Annex D.

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1st Squadron
2nd Squadron
3rd Squadron

Regimental Control
939th Engineer Company
37th Medical Company
551st Light Maintenance Company (DS)
409th Radio Research Detachment
541st Military Intelligence Detachment
33rd CDRC Detachment
17th Public Information Detachment
28th Military History Detachment

5. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. Prior to Operations:

(1) VC Main Force:

UNIT	STRENGTH	CURRENT & PROBABLE LOCATION	DATE	EVALUATION
5th Div HQ	100	YS 6058	10Oct	B/2
274th Regt	1850	YS 5585	10Oct	B/2
800 Bn 274th	450	YS 5585	28Sep	B/2
308 Bn 274th	450	YS 5363	28Sep	B/2
265 Bn 274th	600	YS 5585	28Sep	B/2
275th Regt	1600	YS 5770	10Oct	B/2
239 Arty Bn	500	YS 6781	10Oct	C/3
250 NVA Regt	1000	Southern War Zone D	10Oct	B/2

(2) VC Local Force:

UNIT	STRENGTH	CURRENT & PROBABLE LOCATION	DATE	EVALUATION
500 DONG MAI Bn	450	YT 0352177	10Oct	C/3
860 Bn	300	YS 5875	10Oct	C/3
C106 Co (unconfirmed)	unk	LONG KHANH Province	10Oct	C/3
H.1 Plat	50	YT 6006	5Aug	C/3
H.2 Plat	50	YT 650250	(Base of Operations)	
H.3 Plat	20	YS 810940	(Base of Operations)	
H.4 Plat	50	YS 4596	24Aug	B/2
G33 THI XA Plat	30	YT 150140	(Base of Operations)	
C270 VINH COU Plat	30	YT 120170	(Base of Operations)	
CHAU THANH Plat	30	YT 070160	(Base of Operations)	
C26 CHAU THIEN Plat	30	YT 350730	(Base of Operations)	
C17 CAN SU Plat	30	YS 5257353	(Base of Operations)	

(3) Incidents: VC activities along National Highway 1 from BITH HOA to XUAN LOC, south along National Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 2 to BA RIA ranged from ambushes of OVN and ARVN forces to roadblocks and tax collection points. The nature of the incidents indicated an attempt by the forces operating along these lines of communication to restrict the movement of civilian traffic while denying their use by friendly forces. A complete list of incidents is outlined in Annex F to this report.

(4) Reported movements:

(a) An ARVN agent reported that a VC Battalion located vicinity YS 2392 on 4 October moved to the XHON TRACH area vicinity YS 110845. US evaluation F/4 (Comment: No main force battalions are held to be operation in this area at this time).

(b) A KSS agent reported a VC Battalion vicinity YT 3000 to YT 3501 to YT 3200 on 29 September 1966. ARVN evaluation D/3, US evaluation F/5. (Comment: Reliable agent report has unit vicinity YT 3301 on 3 October. Possibly company size element of the 5th VC Division or the unconfirmed LONG KHANH Provincial Company, C106).

(c) An ARVN agent reported the UV 8 3/8 Artillery Battalion was being transported from YT 4703 on 1 October to CAM DUONG (location unknown)

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on 5 October by local laborers: ARVN evaluation C/3. (Comment: No unit is listed under that number; however, elements of the 844 Artillery Regiment are known to be infiltrating South Vietnam and reportedly headed for III CTZ. Leading elements could have reached XUAN LOC area by this time. The regiment was reportedly equipped with the U/1 66mm rocket firing weapon. Characteristics: Maximum range 10km, effective range 500m, kill radius 250m. US evaluation F/6.

(5) Enemy situation. The VC can be expected to harass convoys with mines, sniping, minor attacks of up to platoon size anywhere along routes in the Regimental sector. Mortar and minor harassing attacks could also be expected on base camps and combat base areas. Although not presently indicated, the VC does possess the capability of mounting a regimental size ambush on convoys and attacks on the 11th Armored Cavalry Base Camp.

(6) Intelligence sources: The following sources were utilized to plan the operation:

(a) II F Force V Intelligence Report.

(b) Agent reports.

1 18th Division (ARVN), (Formerly 10th Division).
2 Central Intelligence Operations.
3 National Police.

(c) Intelligence Estimate - III Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ).

(d) MACV monthly order of battle updated.

(e) II F Force V Intelligence Imagery.

(f) Photograph maps.

(g) Visual reconnaissance.

(7) The intelligence information compiled for Operation ATLANTA varied in currency from four days in the case of order of battle (OB) reports to a little over a week for the incident reports. The information incorporated in the initial operation order was only two to four days old.

b. During the month of November the VC continued to harass the 11th Armored Cavalry with units up to platoon size. His actions were characterized by mining incidents along the Saigon - Xuan Loc railroad, sabotage and harassment of ASP's, POW dumps, bridges, and acts of terrorism on the local populace. His activities were restricted primarily to the Long Binh - Bien Hoa area. Information (agent reports) received on 13 November noted the presence of VC platoons and companies operating in Area of Operations 3 (AO3) thus giving him the capability of massing main force units in AO3 for a direct attack on the base camp. However, available information indicated no such threat was imminent. Agent reports further disclosed the presence of the 274th VC Regt along National Highway 1 between North South grid lines 50 and 60. Other reports disclosed the construction of ambush positions on the north and south of Highway 1 vicinity YT 6206. Documents discovered in the vicinity of Hill 309 (YT 4800) indicated the presence of the 84th Rear Service Unit which normally operates in PHOUK TUY Province. Visual reconnaissance flights by Forward Air Controllers (FAC) revealed the possible evacuation by women and children from villages northeast of the base camp. No appreciable amount of information of immediate combat value was gleaned from the RED HAZE and SLAR missions flown in support of Operation ATLANTA.

c. Terrain was a consideration, but not a limiting factor on Operation ATLANTA. The primary area of operation was confined to LONG KHANH Province. The central portion of LONG KHANH Province generally has rolling terrain covered with plantations and cultivated fields. North of XUAN LOC the area breaks into a series of long ridges radiating from Hill 396 (YT 3912). Vegetation in this area consists mainly of plantations along Route 20 and to the east of Hill 396. The area is interspersed with cultivated fields and hamlets. To the east of XUAN LOC the terrain is dominated by CHUA CHAN (YT 6010) and is covered with dense forest. On the south, high ground follows generally along Interprovincial Route 2 with long

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ridges extending east and west. To the east of Interprovincial Route 2, the terrain is broken by hills as is the area southwest of Xuan Loc. Vegetation in this area consists of isolated rubber plantations interspersed with cultivated fields, but the majority of the vegetation is dense first growth, with some secondary growth. Streams traverse the area draining generally to the east and west of Xuan Loc. The majority of these streams are non-potable.

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d. CA/PSYOP:

(1) Psychological Operations:

(a) Psychological operations during ATLANTA began initially by using a "Good Guy" leaflet drop and utilizing loudspeaker transmissions to announce the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's arrival in the XUAN LOC area. Reports later received indicated this method was appreciated by the people of the District of Xuan Loc thus developing an immediate rapport with the local populace. Leaflet drops were also made on suspected and known Viet Cong positions and on Viet Cong controlled hamlets. In conjunction with the drops and during tactical operations loudspeaker transmissions both live and taped were directed at the Viet Cong from overhead. Information received from ralliers and prisoners indicated that the loudspeakers were heard and that the leaflets were being read.

(b) Activities. During Operation ATLANTA the following support missions were conducted:

- 1 1,979,500 leaflets were dropped during 16 leaflet drop missions.
- 2 9 loudspeaker missions were flown for a total of 13.0 loudspeaker hours.
- 3 5 "No Dose" missions were flown totaling 10.8 hours.
- 4 5,000 carfew posters were distributed.
- 5 39,400 news letters were distributed.
- 6 200, 1967 Vietnamese calendars were distributed.

(2) Civic Action: On 5 December (in conjunction with a cordon and search operation conducted by the 3rd Squadron of the villages of CHU HUY and BINH DAI) a MEDCAP plan was initiated. In addition to medical assistance basic foodstuffs (powered milk, bulgar wheat, rice, and cooking oil) were distributed to the villagers.

Once the villages had been cordoned off the people were airlifted to district headquarters at DUC THANH for screening and issuing of identification cards. Over 300 persons were transported in the operation. However, only 20 of them permitted the MEDCAP team to administer any medical aid. It was quite apparent from the outset that the people had been well indoctrinated by the Viet Cong on the dire consequences and effects if any of them should accept medical help from US troops. The food was received in much the same manner.

This was the first time the Blackhorses Regiment has encountered a locale where so many of the people were pro-Viet Cong. In order to counteract this situation an extensive psychological program has been initiated in this area stressing the importance of the people rallying to the cause of the Government of Vietnam.

6. (C) MISSION: The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment secures a base camp vicinity XS 4296; clears and secures National Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 333 from BIEN HOA (YT 0012) to GIA RAY (YT 6312); Interprovincial Route 2 from XUAN LOC to the boundary of the 1st Australian Task Force (1st ATF) THOR at XS 4697; National Highway 20 from junction of National Highway 1 (YT 3410) to RV vic YT 3616; Interprovincial Route 333 from GIA RAY (YT 6312) to VO DAT (YT 7332; opens and clears a route from vicinity YT 4401 to LOB THANH (YS 1392).

7. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: The overall concept of the operation was developed with the idea of executing the plan in four phases.

a. Phase I would involve a clear and secure operation along National Highway 1 from BIEN HOA (YT 0012) to XUAN LOC (YT 4506) by the 1st Squadron with the 919th Engineer Company preparing to assist in base camp development. The 2nd and 3rd Squadrons would continue to provide security for the staging area with the 2nd Squadron ready to assume the mission of the 1st Squadron and provide a troop size reaction force.

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b. Phase II would commence with the 2nd Squadron assuming the mission of the 1st Squadron and occupying a combat base vicinity of the road junction of National Highways 1 and 20 while the 1st Squadron would move to occupy a combat base vicinity YT 4301 and secure the Regimental Base Camp site (YS 4396). In addition the 1st Squadron would be prepared on order, to clear and secure national Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 333 south and east from XUAN LOC (YT 4508) to GIA RAY (YT 6312). 3rd Squadron to continue securing the staging area and be prepared on order to establish a combat base vicinity YS 3995 and secure and clear Interprovincial Route 2 from XUAN LOC (YT 4508) to the boundary of 1st ATF TAOR (YS 4679). The 919th Engineer Company (Armored) would be prepared on order to move to the base camp and assist in its development.

c. In Phase III the 1st Squadron would continue to secure the base camp and conduct route security on National Highway 1 from XUAN LOC (YT 4508) to GIA RAY (YT 6312) while being prepared to conduct a route security mission on Interprovincial Route 333 from GIA RAY (YT 6312) to VO DAT (YT 7332). 2nd Squadron would continue its route security mission on National Highway 1 while conducting search and clear operations south of the road junction of Routes 1 and 20 at the same time clearing routes to ONG XUE rubber plantation vicinity YS 3998; on order relieve 1st Squadron of base camp security mission. The 3rd Squadron would on order secure a combat base vicinity YS 3995; on order clear and secure Interprovincial Route 2 from XUAN LOC to the boundary of the 1st ATF TAOR; and be prepared to open and clear a route from the Regimental Base Camp to LONG THANH (YS 1392) and provide base camp security. 919th Engineer Company would continue to provide assistance for base camp development and combat engineer support for the squadrons.

d. During the final phase, Phase IV, the 1st Squadron would on relief of base camp security by the 2nd Squadron continue its route security mission on National Highway 1 from XUAN LOC to GIA RAY and initiate similar operations on Interprovincial Route 333 to VO DAT. 2nd and 3rd Squadrons and 919th Engineer Company would continue with their assigned missions stated in Phase III.

8. (C) EXECUTION: 20 October - Changes in Task Organisation

1st Squadron

Troop L, 3rd Squadron

1st Squadron initiated Operation ATLANTA at 0230H moving out on National Highway 1 from the Regimental Staging Area in LONG BINH (YT 0612) organizing a combat base vicinity YT 4301. During the move small arms fire was received by Company D and Howitzer Battery. 2nd Squadron remained in the staging area preparing for movement on 23 October while the 3rd Squadron provided security for 2nd Battalion, 13th Artillery to XUAN LOC.

21 October

Troop B and Company G conducted search and clear operations vicinity YS 4496 with only light contact. Numerous tunnels were uncovered and destroyed. Troop L conducted operations to the east, burning 30 huts and destroying 10 tunnels at YS 354927. At 2140 hours Troop B received a burst of automatic weapons fire wounding one man, and observed 13 VC probing perimeter positions vicinity YS 440982. Fire was returned with unknown results.

22 October

Operation ATLANTA continued with only minor incidents during the day. One M113 (ACAV) from Troop B was damaged by a pressure mine at YS 455875 with no casualties. Four Viet Cong Suspects (VCS) were detained by Troop B vicinity YS 474857 and evacuated for interrogation.

23 October - Changes in Task Organisation

1st Squadron

Troop L reverted to 3/11 effective 1500 hours.

Operation ATLANTA continued with negative contact. A tank from the 919th Engineer Company was damaged by a mine at YS 449983 resulting in one US

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WIA. 2nd Squadron moved from the staging at 0050 with Troop O and advance party elements to organize a combat base at ONG QUE vicinity YS 3999.

24 October

Operation ATLANTA continued with the 1st Squadron conducting search and clear operations vicinity YS 4497 resulting in negative contact. A 1/2 ton truck with three passengers from the 409th Radio Research Detachment received one command detonated claymore mine and 3 rounds of small arms fire vicinity YS 448975, resulting in one US KIA, one US WIA, and one 1/2 ton truck damaged. The main body of the 2nd Squadron departed the staging area 0738 hours, closing in its combat base at 0900 hours without contact.

25 October

Operation ATLANTA continued with search and destroy operations vicinity of the Regimental Base Camp and the 2nd Squadron's combat base resulting in negative contact. 3rd Squadron provided security for the STARCUM site (YS 080115) as part of UNIONTOWN (continuous operation - security for HIEN HOA area).

26 October - Operation ATLANTA continued with negative contact. 1st Squadron conducted patrols vicinity of the Regimental Base Camp and ROADRUNNER operations along Interprovincial Route 333 from XUAN LOC (YT 440050) to OIA RAY (YT 630120). Day and night patrols were conducted by the 3rd Squadron from the staging area.

27 October - Operation ATLANTA continued with the 1st Squadron making a zone reconnaissance south of the Regimental Base Camp. During the reconnaissance at least 10 tunnels containing clothing, rice, hand grenades, cooking utensils and documents were located and destroyed. Three ACAY's from Troop A were damaged by pressure type mines resulting in one US WIA. Negative contact was made by the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons.

28 October - Operation ATLANTA continued with search and destroy operations vicinity Regimental Base Camps and BUDDY operations with a local Popular Force (PF) platoon achieving negative results. Troop K provided a convoy escort for 188th Maintenance Battalion from LONG BINH YT 060120 to Blackhorse Base Camp without incident. In conjunction with the 1st Squadron's activities along Interprovincial Route 2, 165,000 lasslets were dropped from YS 4690 to YS 4683.

29 October - Operation ATLANTA continued without contact. Search and clear operations by Troop A disclosed a hut containing 12 expended 57mm RR rounds, a home made battery, and anti-American propaganda, at YS 465858. Troop F continued BUDDY operations with a local PF platoon vicinity YT 444015.

30 October - Operation ATLANTA continued with local security operations around Blackhorse Base Camp. Contact was made with 4-6 VC by an ambush patrol from . Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron vicinity YS 456980 engaging the VC with small arms and hand grenades. The enemy returned fire with 7-10 rounds of small arms and then broke contact. VC casualties unknown; no US casualties. Troop L continued to provide security for the LONG BINH ASP.

31 October - Operation ATLANTA continued with the advance elements of the Regimental Command Group closing in the base camp at 0900 hours. Search and destroy operations continued in the vicinity of the base camp while Troop C provided security for a bridge classification team from Company C, 27th Engineer Battalion (C) from XUAN LOC along National Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 333 to C.6 GIA HUY (YT 678198). Troop C received 10-15 rounds automatic weapons fire vicinity YT 464053 with negative results. Search and clear operations by Troop A located a hut (YS 353928) containing 250 pounds of rice. Progress continued on the development of the base camp by 27th Engineer Battalion. Troop S uncovered 200 pounds of rice, LOC BA-30 batteries and medical supplies vicinity YT 443051. Troop L continued to provide security for the LONG BINH ASP with no contact.

1 November - Troops A and B conducted a dismounted night march at 0230 hours encircling villages at YS 420940 and YS 463996 with no contact. The 27th Engineer Battalion continued to develop the base camp.

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2 November - Changes in Task Organization

1st Squadron

Troop F (OPCON 1/11 for base camp security)

Preparation for the displacement of the Regimental Headquarters elements continued while Troop C road marched to GIA RAY (YT 621110) along National Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 333 without contact. Security measures were initiated by the 1st Squadron to assist Company C, 27th Engineer Battalion in securing the GIA RAY rock quarry. Security operations by the 3rd Squadron continued in the LONG BINH - SIEN HOA area.

3 November - Changes in Task Organization

Troop I OPCON 2/11 for base camp security

The Regimental Command Group closed in to the base camp area (YS 441955) at 0920 hours. Troop A with support from Howitzer Battery continued to operate along Interprovincial Route 333. Troops E and G received automatic weapons and small arms fire with Troop G observing at least six persons vicinity YS 444962. Troop F engaged two Viet Cong vicinity YS 425975 firing 3 rounds M79 cannister with unknown results.

4 November

1st Squadron

Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery attached to 1st Squadron.

Operation ATLANTIS continued with the 1st Squadron pushing northward in conjunction with BUDDY cordon and search operations in the SUOI CAT area. Sporadic mining and small arms incidents were encountered with no US casualties. Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery provided fire support for the operation from GIA RAY. Base camp security continued to be maintained by the 2nd Squadron while the 3rd Squadron secured the staging area.

5 November - Troop A provided security for engineer work parties constructing culverts in the vicinity CAV GIA HUYNH (YT 677198). Route clearing operations proceeded northward along Interprovincial Route 333. Company B, 27th Engineer Battalion commenced work on a rock quarry site off National Highway 1. In support of the Regiment's activities loudspeaker operations were conducted at VO DAT from YT 8642 to YT 8945. Base camp and staging area security continued to be maintained by the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons with no significant contact.

6 November - Security and route clearing operations continued along Interprovincial Route 333 with the 1st Squadron making a show of force at VO DAT. 600 pounds of wheat were located (YT 647078) and evacuated by Troop C. Sniper fire vicinity of YT 654071 was received by Troop C resulting in one US KIA. Troop E and 2nd Squadron trains closed in the Regimental Base Camp from their combat base camp at QNG QUE. Units of the 3rd Squadron continued to conduct security operations with elements of the 3rd Brigade 4th Infantry Division; no significant contact made.

7 November

Troops A and B conducted dismounted patrols in AQ; while Troop C conducted a route reconnaissance on Highway 1. In conjunction with the patrols, BUDDY operations were run with elements of the 52nd Ranger Battalion vicinity YT 640205 east to YT 694205 and YT 772280. Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery displaced to YT 690218 to provide support east of VO DAT (YT 7332). Construction of a culvert bypass (YT 678198) was completed by Company C, 27th Engineer Battalion and opened for traffic. Security of the base camp continued to be provided by the 2nd Squadron; staging area security was provided by elements of the 3rd Squadron with Troop L and one platoon of tanks from Company M working with elements of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division providing a screen of the LONG BINH (SP) with no significant contact.

8 November - Changes in Task Organization.

1st Squadron OPCON to 1st Infantry Division effective 1400 hours.

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Troop I released to 3rd Squadron for Operations UNIONTOWN and MARSHALLTOWN

1st Squadron terminated its operations in the GIA RAY - VO OAT area at 1000 hours. Squadron elements cleared GIA RAY (YT 6311) at 1300 hours on their way to LAI KHE (XT 7738) stopping for - Class I and III resupply at the LONG BINH staging area. The first elements of the squadron arrived, 200km's later, in LAI KHE at 1630 hours, and by 1830 the entire squadron had closed. The move involved approximately 200 vehicles and 1000 men completely combat ready. Elements of Troop G relieved the 1st Squadron contingent of security operations around the rock quarry at GIA RAY while Troop E ran search and clear operations from the Blackhorse Base Camp vicinity of YS 4590. Occasional small arms fire was received by Troops F and I with negative results. However, Troop E had an AGAV detonate a pressure type mine (YS 457900) resulting in one US WIA and damage to the AGAV. The remaining Regimental units conducted security operations in the staging area and LONG BINH - BIEN HOA area.

9 November

1st Squadron continued under the OPCON of the 1st Infantry Division as part of Operation ATTLEBORO. 2nd Squadron continued to protect the base camp and dispatch patrols outside the perimeter with no contact. No significant activities occurred in the staging area. 3rd Squadron continued Operation UNIONTOWN.

10 November

Local patrols and security of the base camp area continued to be maintained by the 2nd Squadron while the 3rd Squadron secured the staging area and operated in the 173rd Airborne Brigade's TAOR as part of Operation UNIONTOWN. 1st Squadron remained OPCON 1st Infantry Division. No significant results were achieved.

11 November

1st Squadron continued under the OPCON to the 1st Infantry Division.

2nd Squadron continued patrolling and securing the Regimental Base Camp with one platoon from Troop G providing security for the GIA RAY rock quarry in the vicinity of YT 6311. Troop G had an AGAV hit by a claymore mine (YT 627071) resulting in one US PTA and negative damage to the track.

3rd Squadron continued Operation UNIONTOWN and provided security for the staging area. An M Company M48A3 Tank attached to Troop K detonated a pressure type mine vicinity of YT 058149 slightly damaging the vehicle. On National Highway 1 a 3/4 ton truck from Troop K traveling in convoy was hit by a claymore mine resulting in no US casualties and only minor damage to the vehicle.

12 November

1st Squadron remained under the OPCON of the 1st Infantry Division.

Security of the base camp and the rock quarry continued to be maintained by the 2nd Squadron.

3rd Squadron continued providing support for Operation UNIONTOWN and security for the staging area with no significant action.

13 November

1st Squadron continued to provide armor support for Operation ATTLEBORO under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division.

2nd and 3rd Squadrons continued to maintain security of the base camp and staging area respectively.

14 November

Activities remained the same with the maneuver elements continuing with their missions. Company H conducted search and destroy operations vicinity of XUAN LOC (YT 3810) with negative results.

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15 November

1st Squadron continued to furnish support for Operation ATTLEBORO in the LAI KHE area.

Operation ATLANTA continued with the 2nd Squadron conducting local patrols in conjunction with the security of the base camp. Convoy continued to arrive and depart from the base camp daily, traveling National Highway 1 from LONG BINH to the Regimental Base Camp without incident. 3rd Squadron provided convoy escorts in addition to securing the staging area perimeter and providing one Troop for Operation UNIONTOWN.

16 November

At 2025 hours the Regimental Base Camp received an estimated 30 rounds of 82mm mortar fire and 75mm recoilless rifle fire vicinity of YS 428981, YS 462972 and YS 455975. Fire was immediately returned with 105 mm howitzers, 4.2" mortars, and 90mm tank fire which quickly and effectively silenced the VC guns. Results of the attack were 8 US KIA and minor equipment damages. A later check of the VC gun positions indicated the enemy had departed in a hurry leaving unexpended 82mm mortar and 75mm Recoilless Rifle rounds.

1st Squadron remained OPCON to the 1st Infantry Division on Operation ATTLEBORO.

2nd Squadron continued Operation ATLANTA conducting local patrols from the base camp and securing the OIA RAY rock quarry all with negative results.

3rd Squadron continued providing support for Operation UNIONTOWN and the security of the staging area. Troop L received 25 rounds of automatic weapons fire vicinity of YT 080085, fire returned with negative results. Troop I observed and challenged 2 civilians in black pajamas breaking a trail through the jungle (YT 057144). Upon being challenged they broke and ran at which time the troop fired 20 rounds of small arms, possibly wounding one of them.

17 November

Patrols from the 2nd Squadron searched the area around the base camp to locate the positions used by the VC to shell the camp the previous night. At 1135 hours Troop G found 32 expended 75mm Recoilless Rifle rounds and one live 75mm recoilless rifle misfire at YS 455979. A further search of the area found three mortar positions (YS 458974) with six 82mm rounds, assorted mortar fuses and night firing equipment.

1st Squadron continued Operation ATLANTA under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division at LAI KHE.

3rd Squadron continued to support Operation UNIONTOWN and provide security for the Regimental Staging Area. At 2115 hours an ambush patrol from Troop I heard noises at YT 080118 engaging the suspected area with one round of M79 cannister; two hand grenades were received on position. 8 - 10 rounds of M-16 were also fired in the direction of the noises along with six rounds of 4.2 inch HE causing a secondary explosion after the patrol withdrew. No US casualties, VC casualties unknown.

18 November

1st Squadron continued Operation ATTLEBORO under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division.

2nd Squadron continued to conduct patrols and secure the base camp perimeter and the rock quarry. Probing actions were made along the perimeter in Troop E's sector at 0155 hours and 2325 hours. Suspected locations were engaged with M79 rounds, results unknown.

3rd Squadron continued to provide security for the staging area and support for Operation UNIONTOWN. The 2nd Platoon of Troop L at 1825 hours received 30 rounds of small arms fire vicinity YT 075066. Fire was returned with M-79 and small arms fire, results unknown. Contact was broken at 1845 hours.

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19 November

1st Squadron continued to participate in Operation ATTLEBORO now under the operational control of the 173d Airborne Brigade effective 0700 hours.

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2nd Squadron conducted patrols in the vicinity of the base camp (YT 4497) and provided security for the rock quarry. At 0045 hours a patrol from Troop F received 5-7 60mm mortar rounds from IS 430951 resulting in no US casualties. Artillery fire was returned with unknown results.

3rd Squadron continued UNIONTOWN operations and security of the staging area. The area of operation remained quiet with only occasional small arms firing. A squad size base camp was located (YT 095086) consisting of a 20 meter long trench, 5 foxholes, and cooking utensils.

20 November

1st Squadron was released from operational control of 173d Airborne Brigade and closed on the staging area at 2035 hours.

2nd Squadron continued to conduct patrols and provide security for the base camp.

3rd Squadron continued to support operation UNIONTOWN and security of the staging area as well as the LONG BINH ASP.

21 November - Changes to Task Organization.

Troop K and L OPCON 173d Airborne Brigade in support of UNIONTOWN.

The Regiment continued Operation ATLANTA and was relieved of the UNIONTOWN mission by the 173d Airborne Brigade. At 1025 hours a regimental convoy traveling on National Highway 1 towards XUAN LOC was ambushed vicinity YT 275100 to YT 290099. Fire was immediately returned by the escort platoon from Troop C along with air strikes by helicopters and fighter aircraft in addition to artillery being fired in support of the beleaguered convoy. The 1st Squadron moved to the ambush site as a reaction force from the LONG BINH staging area. Major contact was broken at 1137 hours except for sporadic contact during the remainder of the day. US casualties were 7 KIA (5 from 11th Armored Cavalry), 8 WIA (7 from the 11th Armored Cavalry); VC losses included a final total of 20 KIA (BC) 1 VCS. Weapons captured listed in Annex A. US equipment losses included a M113 destroyed, 1 M113 damaged, 4 2 1/2 ton trucks destroyed, 1 UH1B damaged; VC losses included 1 57mm RR, 1 AK47 rifle, 2 RPG rounds and miscellaneous documents.

1st Squadron remained in the area of the ambush to conduct a sweep the following day.

2nd Squadron remained at the base camp conducting security patrols around the perimeter.

3rd Squadron was released from Operation UNIONTOWN at 1100 hours by the 173d Airborne Brigade. Continued to provide security for the staging area.

22 November

1st Squadron conducted search and destroy operations south of the ambush site. Four more VC bodies were found with another 75-100 VC KIA (Possible). Eight 57mm RR rounds, a tripod W/T&E mechanism for either a recoilless rifle or heavy machine gun was also located.

The 2nd and 3rd Squadrons continued to provide base camp and staging area security respectively.

23 November

1st Squadron performed base camp security for a portion of the perimeter with no significant events. Patrols from Troop C found a grave (YT 274072) containing a body with a pistol belt and one US grenade.

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2nd Squadron conducted search and destroy operations in the vicinity of YT 4003 and provided security for a portion of the GIA RAY rock quarry. At 1144 hours Troop F heard 8-10 rounds of small arms fire vicinity YT 4250015; a sweep of the area was made with negative results. A platoon from Troop G received an unknown number of rounds of automatic weapons fire and heard one large explosion believed to be a slymore vicinity YT 570063. Fire was returned with automotive weapons with negative results. A possible tax collection point was reported by the Air Observer at YT 575605.

3rd Squadron continued to secure the staging area and supported Operation UNIONTOWN.

24 November

Operation ATLANTA continued with the 1st Squadron performing convoy escort missions from LONG BINH to the Regimental Base Camp; conducted search and destroy operations in the vicinity of their assigned sector of the base camp perimeter. Troop C reported locating a fortification complex consisting of 60 bunkers and trenches forming a "T" from YT 278087 to YT 275075, and from YT 278080 east to YT 281079.

2nd Squadron conducted search and destroy operations (YS 3495) with Troop F and provided security for the GIA RAY rock quarry. On two different occasions persons were detected along the perimeter manned by Troop E. A trip mine was ignited at 0315 hours revealing two persons. Fire was received at this time resulting in one US KIA. Two rounds of mortar fire were received at 1800 hours in the 2nd Squadron area. Light fire teams were scrambled and the howitzer batteries from the 1st and 2nd Squadrons were used to engage the suspected mortar position. Reinforcing fires were also requested and provided by the 54th Artillery Group in XUAN LOC.

3rd Squadron remained in the staging area providing security and support for Operation UNIONTOWN.

25 November

1st Squadron conducted search and destroy operations vicinity of YT 495012. 35 VCS were apprehended in a hamlet containing VC propaganda material and empty 60mm mortar containers; seven were detained for further questioning. Troop B also conducted ROADRUNNER operations from YS 4497 to YT 2810 without incident.

2nd Squadron utilizing Troop F opened Route 320 for tracked vehicles, from the base camp (YS 439956) west to National Highway 15 at LONG THANH (YS 140920). The bridge located at YS 205935 was determined passable only for wheeled vehicles with a bypass available for tracked vehicles. ROADRUNNER and security operations were performed by Troops E and G.

3rd Squadron continued to provide security for the staging area and support for Operation UNIONTOWN with Troops I and L under the operational control of the 173d Airborne Brigade. Troop K conducted ROADRUNNER operations and convoy escort from LONG BINH to XUAN LOC without incident.

26 November

Operations remained quiet with the squadrons providing convoy escorts, limited search and clear operations and base camp security. Support for UNIONTOWN activities continued to be provided by the 3rd Squadron.

27 November

Search and destroy operations by the 1st Squadron east of the perimeter uncovered 90 1 1/2 volt batteries of local manufacture in a tree wrapped in plastic. Troop A also found 9 VC packs with personal equipment and new black nylon pajamas.

The 2nd Squadron conducted search and destroy operations northwest of the base camp and continued to maintain security of the GIA RAY rock quarry site.

Security of the staging area and continued support of UNIONTOWN operations were provided by the 3rd Squadron. Convoy escorts were also provided for regimental vehicles moving to and from the base camp.

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28 November - Changes in Task Organization

Troop E relieved Troop L of its UNIONTOWN mission effective 1200 hours. 14

1st Squadron continued Operation ATLANTA with search and destroy operations (YT 4900) northeast of the base camp with light contact. ROADRUNNER and convoy escort operations were run between Blackhorse Base Camp and LONG BINH.

2nd Squadron operated north of the base camp on search and destroy operations and continued to maintain security for the rock quarry.

3rd Squadron continued to participate in UNIONTOWN with Troops I and L under the operational control of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

29 November

Operation ATLANTA continued with the 1st Squadron making a reconnaissance in force along National Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 333 from XUAN LOC to GIA RAY.

2nd Squadron assumed a portion of the UNIONTOWN mission under the operational control of the 173d Airborne Brigade. Troop F provided escort for Regimental convoys and conducted search and destroy operations vicinity of YT 4302.

3rd Squadron continued on Operation ATLANTA with one Troop still participating in Operation UNIONTOWN.

30 November

1st Squadron's reconnaissance in force operation continued with no contact. A report from a 10th ARVN Division PAC indicated approximately 300 VC were observed at YS 4485. 2nd Squadron units were dispatched to conduct a search and destroy operation which resulted in only minor contact.

3rd Squadron meanwhile maintained security of the staging area and continued to move its equipment and supplies to the base camp. Troop L completed its move to the base camp at 1315 hours.

1 December - Changes to Task Organization.

Troop G relieved Troop I of OPCCN mission to 173d Airborne Brigade.

Troop I reverted to 3rd Squadron control.

1st Squadron secured the rock quarry and conducted ROADRUNNER operations between GIA RAY and the base camp.

2nd Squadron Operation ATLANTA with negative contact and participated in Operation UNIONTOWN with Troops E and G.

The 3rd Squadron (-) closed in the base camp at 1400 hours, with the remaining elements from the Provisional Squadron.

2 December

1st Squadron conducted an area reconnaissance (YS 4997) and a ROADRUNNER operation to GIA RAY at the same time providing security for the GIA RAY rock quarry. At 1640 hours a resupply convoy consisting of 2 M48A3 Tanks and 3 ACAV's (from Company D and Troop E) and 2 2 1/2 ton trucks (one from the 27th Engineer Battalion) was ambushed by an estimated VC Main Force Battalion (Reinforced) at YT 627071 while returning from GIA RAY. A reaction force of the 1st Squadron (-) moved to the site shortly after contact was made. Reinforcing fire was received from 7 air strikes and artillery fire from the 5th Artillery Group at XUAN LOC. The main ambush force was positioned southwest of National Highway 1 with elements of the squadron positioned on the west, north and east sides of VC Positions. TAC air and artillery were utilized to seal off the escape routes to the south. Contact was broken at 1750 hours, with only sporadic firing continuing until 1950 hours.

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Illumination over the sealed area and suppressing fires were provided by an ACH7 "Spook" ship after nightfall. As of 2400 hours US casualties were 13 KIA, 1 ACAV destroyed, and 1 M48A3 tank damaged. VC losses included 38 KIA (BC), 3 machineguns (2 with bipods) and 1 AK47 assault rifle. The attackers wore light blue uniforms with pistol belts and bandoleers of ammunition draped over their shoulders. One noticeable item of clothing lacking was that most of them were not wearing shoes. Expended rounds of 57mm and 75mm recoilless rifles were found near the ambush site.

2nd Squadron continued to secure the base camp and support Operation UNIONTOWN.

3rd Squadron secured the base camp and conducted area reconnaissance in the vicinity of coordinates YS 4189.

3 December

At 0700 hours the Regimental Command Group moved to the site of the ambush while the 1st Squadron continued search and destroy operations south and west of the ambush site. At 0720 hours Troop A uncovered an extensive tunnel system (YT 597063) and shortly thereafter captured 3 VC, 2 of whom were wounded. One of the VC stated that he was a member of the 1st Company, 1st Battalion, 275th Regiment, 5th VC Division. At 1405 hours Troop C captured another wounded VC and evacuated him for medical treatment. Prior to daylight the VC's route of withdrawal had been sealed by artillery from 2/35th Artillery and an Air Force AC-47 orbiting overhead.

The 2nd Squadron remained at the base camp and conducted ROADRUNNER operations between the base camp and LONG BINH.

The 3rd Squadron moved from the base camp to establish blocking positions along National Highway 1 from YT 580065 to YT 630087 in support of 1st Squadron's search and destroy operations at the ambush site. Negative contact was made and the squadron closed in the base camp at 1815 hours.

4 December

1st Squadron continued to search the 2 December ambush site. At 1025 hours Troop C captured a 75mm recoilless rifle with T&E mechanism and tripod at YT 629073. Later on Troop C found 1 75mm recoilless round, 3 grenades, 8 entrenching tools, 25 foxholes and 1 VC KIA (BC) vicinity YT 634078. Total losses from the ambush were 1 US KIA (from 27th Engineer Battalion), 22 US WIA and 99 VC KIA (BC), 3 VCC (WIA). See Annex B for breakdown of weapons captured.

2nd Squadron continued to conduct ROADRUNNER operations between the Regimental Base Camp, and LONG BINH and provide support for Operation UNIONTOWN.

3rd Squadron continued to improve its perimeter defenses while providing base camp security.

5 December

ROADRUNNER operations were conducted between GIA RAY and LONG BINH with negative contact by the 1st and 2nd Squadrons.

3rd Squadron mounted a BUDDY search and destroy operation with the 1st Battalion 43rd Infantry Regiment (ARVN) in the vicinity of IS 445850. The ARVN troops made an airmobile assault after the 3rd Squadron had cordoned off the area. Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery was attached for the operation and organized a fire support base at IS 4496. A detailed analysis and report of the operation is outlined in Annex C to this report.

6 December

1st Squadron continued Operation ATLANTA with ROADRUNNER operations to GIA RAY and LONG BINH. Troop B continued to provide security for the GIA RAY rock quarry.

The 2nd and 3rd Squadrons continued to secure the base camp and conduct ROADRUNNER operations to and from LONG BINH.

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7 December

The disposition of the Regiment remained the same except for the 2nd Squadron. With the 1st Squadron securing the rock quarry and the 3rd Squadron providing base camp security the 2nd Squadron terminated Operation ATLANTA and at 1800 hours and came under the operational control of the 173d Airborne Brigade for Operation CANARY/DUCK.

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8 December

The Regiment terminated Operation ATLANTA at 2400 hours.

9. (U) SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Artillery:

(1) Size of Force:

Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry
Howitzer Battery, 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry
Howitzer Battery, 3rd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry
5th Artillery Group

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Battery B, 2d Bn, 35th Artillery (155mm SP) - 2 - 4
December - supported.

1st Squadron on GIA RAY ambush (2 Dec).

4-5 December - supported 3rd Squadron on Operation ALEXANDRIA
along Interprovincial Route 2.

(3) Concept of Operations: The howitzer batteries organic to the Regiment were used in direct support of their parent squadrons with the additional mission of providing general support for the entire Regiment. General support reinforcing fires and harassing and interdiction (H&I) fires were provided by the 5th Artillery Group.

(b) Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Artillery (OPCON to 5th Artillery Group less command from 23rd Artillery Group) (8"/175mm SP) - 21 November and 2 December provided general support reinforcing and H&I fires.

(c) Battery C, 7th Battalion, 75th Artillery (105mm towed) - 20 October - 8 December provided supplementary H&I fires.

b. Signal:

(1) Units Employed: A detachment from Company B, 53rd Signal Battalion consisting of a radio relay terminal (AN/MRC - 17), and HF radio van (AN/GRC-26D), a communications center (AN/MCC - 17) and 10 signal personnel under the command of Lieutenant Ing.

(2) Method of Employment: The detachment was utilized to terminate command and central telephone circuits to II F Force V, provide access to the Army Area Communications System, and to provide a communications center for the 11th Armored Cavalry.

(3) Execution: The Regimental Signal Officer determined what circuits were needed for the operation and forwarded his requirements to the II F Force V Signal Officer. II F Force V then submitted work requests for the installation of the necessary terminals which were established by the 53rd Signal Detachment. Lines from the terminals were extended by personnel from the Regimental Communications Platoon. Initially, circuits were established to the LONG BINH staging area. However, as the Regiment cleared the area these circuits were dropped and others established in the base camp area. The first circuits in the base camp were operational by 31 October 1966.

(4) Concept of Operations: The 53rd Signal Detachment deployed with the forward command post elements of the Regiment on 31 October and remained at the base camp providing communications between the Blackhorse CP and higher headquarters.

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17 (5) Results: The detachment provided continuous communications with high quality circuits throughout the operation. The operation of the Black-hores switchboard and installation of wire to all organic and supporting units in the base camp was accomplished by the Regimental Communications Platoon thus providing all units access to the army area communications system.

c. Army Aviation:

(1) Units Employed:

- (a) Aviation Platoon, HHT, 11th Armored Cavalry
- (b) Aviation Section, H T, 1/11th Armored Cavalry
- (c) Aviation Section, HHT, 2/11th Armored Cavalry
- (d) Aviation Section, HHT, 3/11th Armored Cavalry

(2) Method of Employment:

- (a) Aviation Sections - General support of the Regiment.
- (b) Aviation Sections - Direct support of their respective squadrons; cross-attached between squadrons as situations required.

(3) Concept of Operations:

(a) The Regimental Aviation platoon provides a limited lift capability within the transport section utilizing six UH-1D's, and command and control support utilizing the two OH-23G's in the command and control section.

(b) The UH-1D's provided aviation support in a variety of ways such as command and control, logistical troop and cargo lifts, combat troop and cargo lifts, medical evacuation, reconnaissance, training, aircraft maintenance, administration, mail delivery, FIC, psychological warfare, and hauling of perishable rations.

(c) The OH-23G's were used primarily for command and control and administrative missions. They were also used quite extensively for convoy escort, artillery adjustment and reconnaissance operations.

(d) The UH-1C's were effectively used in such roles as ambush suppression, escort of airmobile operations, truck convoy escort, daily perimeter reconnaissance of the base camp, and as a standby immediate reaction security force.

(4) Significant engagements during which Army Aviation played a major role:

(a) Ambush suppression and search and destroy operations, vicinity coordinates YT 2810, 21-23 November 1966.

(b) Ambush suppression and search and destroy operations, vicinity coordinates YT 6307, 2-4 December 1966.

(c) Operation Alexandria in support of 3/11, search and destroy operations vicinity of coordinates YS 4484.

(5) Statistical data on Army Aviation support operations.

(a) Hours flown:

- 1 OH-23G - 627 hours.
- 2 UH-1D & AH-1C - 1387 hours.

(b) Sorties flown:

- 1 Command and control - 85 Sorties.
- 2 Combat Support - 3207 Sorties.
- 3 Combat Assault - 337 Sorties.

(c) Cargo transported - 62.5 tons.

(d) Passengers transported - 4,357.

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a (6) Elements supporting organic aviation units:

(a) 68th Assault Helicopter Company (airlifted 1/43 ARVN Regt on Operation Alexandria 5 Dec).

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(b) 506th CM Co provided POL support at the Regimental Base Camp.

d. U.S. Air Force:

(1) Employment:

U.S. tactical air elements were employed in support of the 11th Armored Cavalry throughout Operation ATLANTA. O-1 Aircraft of the TACP, 11th Armored Cavalry were flown daily in the support of operations. Missions flown consisted of VR, from which valuable intelligence data was collected and submitted; FAC, in which tactical fighter and bomber aircraft were employed against both preplanned and immediate targets selected and requested by the Regimental S-2 and S-3 sections; convoy escorts during which both O-1, and when required, fighter aircraft escorted 11th Armored Cavalry convoys; and Artillery Adjustment, in which the FAC's in the O-1 aircraft adjusted both Regimental and other support artillery against targets within the area of operations. Administrative flights were flown by the O-1 aircraft but these were mainly in support of TACP requirements.

(2) Control:

All Air Force elements utilized during the operation were under the command and control of the 7th U.S. Air Force (PACAF).

(3) Effectiveness:

The majority of the tactical fighter and bomber strikes were, as determined by subsequent agent reports, considered very effective. These agent reports must be relied upon because ground follow up action was generally impossible due to the terrain and/or other tactical considerations. On two occasions when the Regiment had convoys ambushed by sizable Viet Cong forces tactical airpower was instrumental in keeping friendly losses to a minimum and was of great aid in dispatching the enemy force. Killed by air body count in these encounters was low due to the Viet Cong tactic of rapidly evacuating their killed and wounded. Again, subsequent agent reports supported the fact that the tactical air forces employed were very effective and the actual body count told only a small portion of the story.

(4) Statistical Data on Air Force Support Operations:

(a) Sorties Flown:

VR - 132

FAC - 39

Escort - 13

Artillery Adjustment - 10

Administrative -

Combat Strike - 135

(b) Type aircraft flown with breakdown of number of sorties

per type:

F-100 - 89

F-5 - 29

B-57 - 12

A-1 - 4

AC47 - 1

C-1 - 203

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(c) A total of 190 tons of ordnance was expended with the following breakdown by type:

MK-56	1000# Bomb	43
M-117	750# GP Bomb	44
MK-82	500# Bomb	172
MK-81	250# Bomb	28
	250# Frag Bomb	24
BLU-1B/27B	750# Napalm	228
Cannisters of CBU (All Types)		30
2.75mm FFAR		341
Illumination Flares		19
.30 Cal Ammo (Rounds)		15,000 ^{15,000}
.20mm HEI (Rounds)		9,600 ^{9,600}

e. Engineer:

(1) Units:

919th Engineer Company (Armored)

(2) Method of Employment:

During the operation engineer elements were attached to the squadrons based on their assigned missions. Attachments in some cases were made down to troop and company level with an engineer squad providing the support. Tasks assigned the 919th Engineer Company (Armored) ranged from base camp development and security to combat engineer support (clearing mines, destruction of fortifications and construction of temporary bridging).

(3) Execution:

On 20 October the 1st Platoon attached to the 1st Squadron moved to the area of the base camp and began clearing fields of fire, utilizing three tank dozers and one full tracked bulldozer. While the fields of fire were being cleared and the base camp perimeter secured each of the three platoons were providing combat engineer support to the various Armored Cavalry Troops when an independent mission was required. Specifically, a squad from the 1st Platoon supported Troop A by probing and clearing mines in suspected areas and destroying bunkers, tunnels and booby traps. One of the other squads from the 1st Platoon while supporting Troop B on a reconnaissance mission encountered an ingeniously emplaced mine complex designed to disable an armored vehicle and once stopped, destroy it with a charge that was placed at a higher elevation than the first. They also destroyed enemy bunkers and tunnels as they were located. While the 3rd Squad of the 1st Platoon supported Troop L on a search and destroy operation it constructed a hasty bridge crossing in order for the troop to continue with its mission.

On 26 October the 1st Platoon moved back to the staging area to assist the Company Headquarters in their move to the base camp. The following day the 2nd Platoon completed its move to the base camp.

By 31 October the entire company had displaced to the base camp area and was busily engaged in constructing defensive positions and sandbagging living areas. Building materials were obtained and pre-cut for use in construction of permanent bunkers for the base camp. In conjunction with the installation of the perimeter defenses technical assistance was provided to the various troop units occupying the camp.

(h) Results:

By 8 December the perimeter wire and bunker system was 60% completed in the base camp area and work on the base camp roads and drainage ditches were 50% completed. Vertical construction was in its initial stages with priority of effort going to latrines, showers and messhalls. All base camp development projects were accomplished in conjunction with the 27th Engineer Battalion (C).

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Reconnaissance activities were confined mainly to hasty bridge and route surveys. This was caused primarily because of the nature of the duties placed upon the engineer platoons by the units to which they were attached. These missions included tunnel and fortification destruction and minor road and bridge repairs.

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10. (C) RESULTS:

a. Friendly Losses:

KIA - 8
WIA - 49

Equipment lost or destroyed:

ACAV - 3

Equipment damaged:

ACAV - 9
Tank M48A3 - 3
UH1B - 3
UH1D - 1
OH23G - 1

b. Enemy Losses:

(1) Personnel:

KIA (BC) - 136
KIA (Poss) - 104
VCC - 51
VCS - 276

(2) Weapons and ammunition:

Recoilless Rifle:
75mm w/mount - 1
57mm w/mount - 1
Recoilless gun - 5
Submachine gun - 6
Rocket launcher - 1
Mortar (60mm) - 1
Small Arms - 8
Artillery Rounds - 2
Mortar Rounds - 25
Recoilless Rounds - 11
Rockets - 2
Mines - 28
Grenades - 28
Small Arms Ammunition - 2570

(3) Installations:

Base camps - 8
Fortifications
Tunnels - 61
Trenches - 59
Tunnel/Bunker Complex - 3
Foxholes - 284

(4) Foodstuffs:

Rice - 11 1/2 tons
Peanuts - 1 ton
Salt - 1 ton
Miscellaneous - 1100 lbs

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(5) Supplies:

Uniforms - 77 sets
Bicycles - 6
Cooking Utensils - 52
Batteries - 168
Packs and individual web gear - 48 sets

(6) Miscellaneous:

Documents - 41 lbs
Medical Supplies - 54 lbs (+)
Flag - 1 (metal)
Oil - 120 gallons
Money - 53,000 \$VN
Electrical Wire - 2200 meters

11. (U) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Logistics.

Resupply:

(1) Methods. 1st Logistical Command on request of the Regiment established a forward supply point (FSP) in the Regimental Base Camp area. During Operation ATLANTA, resupply of Class I, III and IIIA was handled by supply point distribution from the FSP. Class V resupply was and still is being accomplished by supply point distribution from the 3rd Ordnance Ammunition Supply Point (ASP) at LONG BINH. Class II and IV supply (except PUL repair parts) were received through the 266th Quartermaster Supply and Service Battalion at LONG BINH.

(2) Techniques. Logistical convoys were used to provide the primary mode of resupply for the units of the Regiment and the FSP. Aerial resupply was employed only on an emergency basis.

(3) Basic Loads:

(a) Class I. Each unit of the Regiment carried a 3 day supply of MCI's on their vehicles with a 2 day supply in their unit trains.

(b) Class III. Each Squadron Support Platoon is authorized seven 1200 gallons tank and pump units by TO&E. Additionally, each squadron has been authorized two 5,000 gallon tankers with tractor by MTO&E (US RV Form 47). Experience during the operation has shown that the Regiment used an average of 67,113 gallons of Class III and IIIA per week broken down as follows: JP-4, 8, 904 gallons; AVGAS, 1,506 gallons; WOGAS, 35,487 gallons; DIESEL, 21,216 gallons.

(c) Class V - Below is listed a consolidated list of the Regimental basic load:

DODAC #	DESCRIPTION	BASIC LOAD
1305-A011	Ctg, 12 Ga. Shotgun	40,000
1305-A066	Ctg, 5.56mm, Ball	1,739,880
1305-A068	Ctg, 5.56mm, Tracer	579,960
1305-A124	Ctg, 7.62mm, Tracer, Carton	100,000
1305-A130	Ctg, 7.62mm, Ball, 5 rd Clip	851,480
1305-A131	Ctg, 7.62mm, Linked, Ball and Tracer	612,140
1305-A127	Ctg, 7.62mm, Linked	2,265,560
1305-182	Ctg, Cal .30 Carbine, Ball, 10rd Clip	1,000
1305-A475	Ctg, Cal .45 Ball	27,855
1305-A557	Ctg, Cal .50 Ball and Tracer, Linked	1,207,500
1310-B558	Ctg, 40mm, M16	6,084
1310-B574	Ctg, 40mm, Fixed HE, M386	4,056
1315-C258	Ctg, 90mm, Smk, MP	288
1315-C262	Ctg, 90mm, Canister	2,306
1315-C266	Ctg, 90mm, HE	768
1315-C280	Ctg, 90mm, HE-T	1,442

DODAC #	NOMENCLATURE	BASIC LOAD
1315-CL45	Ctg, 105mm, w/o Fuz	3,600
1315-CL49	Ctg, 105mm, Illum, w/fuze MTSQ	255
1315-CL51	Ctg, 105mm, Smk, Green, w/fuze MTSQ	15
1315-CL52	Ctg, 105mm, Smk, FC, w/fuze MTSQ	360
1315-CL53	Ctg, 105mm, Smk, Red, w/fuze MTSQ	15
1315-CL54	Ctg, 105mm, Smk, WP, w/fuze PD	270
1315-CL55	Ctg, 105mm, Smk, Yellow, w/fuze MTSQ	15
1315-C704	Ctg, 4.2" Mortar, M1, w/fuze PD	2,592
1315-C705	Ctg, 4.2" Mortar, M1, w/o fuze	1,037
1315-C706	Ctg, 4.2" Mortar, Illum	259
1315-C708	Ctg, 4.2" Mortar, Smk, WP	432
1330-0889	Gren, Hand, Frag	8,432
1330-0900	Gren, Hand, Incend	5,941
1330-0910	Gren, Hand, Offensive	1,000
1330-0930	Gren, Hand, Smk, White, HC	960
1330-0940	Gren, Hand, Smk, Green	399
1330-0950	Gren, Hand, Smk, Red	399
1330-0955	Gren, Hand, Smk, Violet	399
1330-H600	Rkt, HE, 5.5"	108
1345-KL43	Mine, AP, M181A, Non-bounding, Non-metallic	792
1345-K935	Thickner, Incend Oil, M1, 100 lb drum	45
1370-L231	Sig, Illum Acft, Red	64
1370-L232	Sig, Illum Acft, Yellow	64
1370-L233	Sig, Illum Acft, Green	64
1370-L307	Sig, Illum Gnd, White Star Cluster	500
1370-L311	Sig, Illum Gnd, White Star, Para	1,000
1370-L314	Sig, Illum Gnd, Green Star, Cluster	500
1370-L315	Sig, Illum Gnd, Red Star, Cluster	500
1370-L320	Sig, Smk, Gnd, Red	200
1370-L322	Sig, Smk, Gnd, Yellow	200
1370-L323	Sig, Smk, Gnd, Red, Para	200
1370-L324	Sig, Smk, Gnd, Green, Para	200
1370-L407	Flare, Acft, para	250
1370-L495	Flare, Surface, Trip, M29	5,676
1370-L621	Starter, Fire	225
1375-M023	Chg, Demo, Block, Comp, Ch	1,480
1375-M030	Chg, Demo, Block, TNT, 1/2 lb	300
1375-M031	Chg, Demo, Block, TNT, 1/2 lb	200
1375-M032	Chg, Demo, Block, TNT, 1 lb	1,850
1375-M130	Cap, Blasting, Spec-Elec, J2	1,850
1375-M131	Cap, Blasting, Spec-non-Elec	1,850
1375-M241	Det, Explosive, M10	180
1375-M456	Cord, Det, Reinforced	9,000
1375-M670	Fuze, Blasting, Time, Explosive loaded	6,000
1375-M766	Ignite, Time Blasting Fuze, Pull Wire Type	1,850
1340-H496	Rkt, 2.75", w/motor	350
1340-H555	Rkt, 66mm, Heat, M72	400
1390-N200	Fuze, Point Det, M78, CP	39
1390-N319	Fuze, Point Det, M51A series	1,998
1390-N335	Fuze, Point Det, M557 w/booster M125A1	261
1390-N412	Fuze, Proximity, M513 series	2,403

(d) Weapons densities (Regiment and attached units) are indicated below:

NOMENCLATURE	AUTH	Q/H
Rifle, M14	475	884
Rifle, M16	2,623	2,234
MD, 7.62mm, M60	847	847
MD, 7.62mm, M60C	48	48
MD, 7.62mm, M73	63	63
Carbine, M1	18	18
Pistol, M1911A1	1,007	1,006
Submachinegun, M3A1	145	45
MD, Cal .50, M2	583	3
Grenade Launcher, M79	347	347
M159 (14 tubes each)	12	12
Rocket Launcher, 3.5"	18	18
M5 (40mm serial)	4	4

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NUMERATURE	AUTH	O/H
M16	7	7
M2	9	9
M23	6	6
M29	11	0

b. Transportation. The Regiment relied principally on organic transportation support located in the support platoons of the squadrons for its combat service support. Tons support was provided by the Saigon Area Transportation Officer to move 2,500 short tons of WABTCC, COMEX containers and tents from the staging area to the base camp area. The Regiment was required to pickup Class II and IV supplies (less repair parts) and Class V from supply points in the LONG BINH area (an approximate 110km turn around). The same combat service support vehicles were also used to deliver from the base camp supply points to the squadrons which in some cases involved another 110km turn around. The use of tactical support vehicles to return to rear area supply points as well as deliver from forward supply points to the units of the Regiment has resulted in the accumulation of excessive mileage on the tactical support vehicles of the Regiment. This situation will be alleviated somewhat when a planned forward supply point for Class V is established in the base camp. However, the problem of Class II and IV will continue until such time as a FSP is established for these supplies.

c. Medical Evaluation and Hospitalization.

(1) Concept: The squadron medical platoons would provide immediate treatment and prepare casualties for evacuation to the 37th Medical Company and/or request "Dust Off" support. Aeromedical support would be provided by either the Regimental Aviation Platoon or Aeromedical units located at LONG BINH depending on the availability of aircraft.

(2) Execution: Each armored cavalry troop normally had medical personnel and evacuation vehicles attached to them from the squadron headquarters troop. Initial medical aid was provided by these aidmen while awaiting aeromedical support. Whenever a landing zone could not be secured or the terrain was such that the helicopters could not land, the attached evacuation vehicles were utilized to move the casualties to the squadron aid station and subsequently to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital in LONG BINH or the 3rd Field Hospital in SAIGON. Over 90% of the Regiment's casualties were evacuated by air. Response to "Dust Off" requests was immediate and highly effective. On several occasions the "Dust Off" pilots exposed themselves and their aircraft to heavy enemy fire as well as friendly artillery fire in order to evacuate a critically wounded trooper.

12. (U) SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: No special techniques or equipment were employed or developed during Operation ATLANTA.

13. (U) COMBAT ANALYSIS: Operation ATLANTA proved to be a most successful operation not only from the standpoint of casualties inflicted on the Viet Cong but the number of lines of communication that have been opened to friendly traffic. No longer can the Viet Cong freely utilize them for movement of their forces and supplies nor set up tax collection points to harass and extort money from the local populace. The persistent, aggressive and far reaching actions of the Regiment have continually kept them off balance thus preventing any massing of forces for any sizable attack. The two instances (ambushes) when we were able to mount an offensive action resulted in complete routs. Geographical locations heretofore considered privileged Viet Cong sanctuaries were breached by the armored columns of the Blackhorse Regiment destroying base camps, fortifications, and capturing precious stores of food. The operation only further demonstrated the flexibility, effectiveness, and prowess of an Armored Cavalry Regiment in an insurgency environment. The situations encountered by the Blackhorse ran the gamut from RQ DRUMMER and convoy escort missions to cordon and search operations whereby the squadrons had to seal off and then move in and physically root the Viet Cong forces. On each occasion the enemy was decisively engaged and felt the full combat power of the Regiment with telling results. Throughout the operation the Regiment has been able to move at will in LONG BINH and BINH TUY Provinces and the northern most portion of PHUC TUY Province both on and off the highways experiencing little difficulty with terrain or geographical obstacles.

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Operation ATL-PTL was the Regiment's initial operation in the XUAN LOC - VO DAT areas and initial efforts were being expended securing and organizing the base camp, however, on at least two occasions ARVN and Popular Force units participated in search and clear/destroy operations in the Blackhorse TACR. Much of the Regiment's preliminary efforts were devoted toward establishing lines of communication with the 18th ARVN Division, District and Province officials and the National Police. Currently the Regiment has exchanged liaison officers with the 18th Division and has established 24 hour contact with the local Vietnamese officials. Additionally, a limited program has been instituted whereby the National Police accompany the squadrons on their operations which so far have proved most beneficial to all concerned. Future plans call for an expansion of this program with the ultimate goal of speeding up the pacification effort in LONG KHANH and BINH TUY Provinces.

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14. (C) LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Operations.

(1) Item: Obtaining clearance to engage sampans.

Discussion: When there is a possibility of helicopter fire teams encountering sampans, target clearances and identification problems may arise since clearance must be obtained from District. This requirement causes undue delay and often results in the target escaping the area before clearance can be obtained.

Observation: The problem can be greatly simplified and facilitated by carrying a Vietnamese Official on board one of the ships who is authorized to give permission to fire once the target has been identified.

(2) Item: Employment of combat engineer platoons.

Discussion: During operations adequate and efficient engineer support is not always provided because the platoons are often fragmented even though operational requirements and missions sometimes do not warrant the employment of an entire platoon.

Observation: Commanders should evaluate their engineer support available and in consonance with the mission at hand assign tasks to the engineer commander at the same time maintaining support flexibility.

(3) Item: Control of air space over the battle area.

Discussion: During an ambush there were four observation aircraft, four UH1D gunships, a medical evacuation helicopter, and one command helicopter all over the ambush site at one time or the other. With the possible exception two of the four observation aircraft were there by necessity. In addition high performance aircraft were making strikes on each side of the road which resulted in a few near misses.

Observation: One airborne element should coordinate the airspace above the battle area when more than one type of aircraft is operating in the area. The old rule of thumb that the slower aircraft should temporarily leave the area until the faster ships have delivered their ordnance would be very appropriate in this case.

(4) Item: Convoy reaction force.

Discussion: The ambushes of 21 November and 2 December clearly indicated the need and the value of a highly mobile, and self sustaining force with the capability of rapidly closing with the enemy.

Observation: Convoy reaction forces should be composed of armor elements, if possible, supplemented with armed helicopters (AH-1G).

(5) Item: Reaction of convoy escorts in an ambush.

Discussion: Recent experiences have shown that the first minutes of contact and reaction thereafter by the escort are most critical.

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Without exception if the escort had not, once clear of the killing zone, returned to the ambush site firing every weapon available the convoys would have been overrun by the VC.

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Observation: Maximum firepower and bold execution of counterambush techniques will effectively neutralize the ambushing force.

(6) Item: Location of Viet Cong ambush forces.

Discussion: During the 21 November 1966 ambush the Viet Cong positioned themselves in the grass and undergrowth flanking (2 to 3 meters) the road with the apparent idea that the gunners field of observation would be masked by their own vehicle (ACAV).

Observation: ACAV gunners should be trained to fire ahead, to the rear, and down as the vehicle passes through a killing zone.

(7) Item: Employment of hand grenade in an ambush.

Discussion: Experience has shown that the Viet Cong position their closest forces just off the road sometimes in the drainage ditches. Machineguns located on the ACAV's experienced difficulty in effectively covering the close-in, immediate area on either side of the vehicle.

Observation: The hand grenade is an excellent close in counterambush weapon.

(8) Item: Employment of snipers as part of the ambush force.

Discussion: The employment of snipers particularly in ambush sites having rubber or similar height trees can inflict heavy casualties on the ambushed element. Snipers are very effective because the ambushed force normally is concentrating its attention on the forces on the ground.

Observation: Plans for fire distribution should include the engagement of possible sniper locations once contact has been made.

(9) Item: Utilization and employment of armed helicopters.

Discussion: The armed helicopters (AH-1G) organic to the Armored Cavalry Regiment can best be utilized and employed when consolidated at Regimental level (air cavalry troop). This allows greater flexibility and continuous support for committed maneuver (squadron) forces.

Observation: Armed helicopters consolidated for combat and combat support missions will allow continuous and greater aerial support for the armored cavalry squadrons.

(10) Item: Liaison requirements.

Discussion: During Operation ATLANTA a liaison officer was assigned to the 10th ARVN Division in XUAN LOC and the 10th ARVN in turn assigned an ARVN officer to HQ, 11th Arm Cav Regt. This made rapid coordination possible and has proven invaluable.

Observation: Timely liaison with other units in an area of operations is of great importance, and can provide information that would be otherwise unattainable.

(11) Item: Control of convoys.

Discussion: During Operation ATLANTA numerous convoys moved to and from the Regimental Base Camp. Control of these convoys during movement and limiting their size became a problem. During movement there is the ever present threat of ambush, especially against such lucrative targets as resupply convoys, and control becomes even more difficult and important.

Observation: Convoys must be effectively controlled and their size limited to reduce the possibility of VC exploitation of weak points.

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(12) Item: Signal support.

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Discussion: When a regimental forward or tactical command post is employed, a multi-channel radio link is necessary to extend necessary command and control circuits. This support must be requested from a higher headquarters. If there is sufficient time for planning, support can be programmed and obtained. However, if a situation develops rapidly, this support may not be available to deploy with the tactical CP.

Observation: A need exists for a permanently assigned multi-channel radio link within an armored cavalry regiment. Equipment has been requested expected in-country in July.

(13) Item: Command Post Vehicle M-577A1.

Discussion: When the command post vehicle M-577A1 is used as a "fixed station" CP, the heat build-up inside the vehicle causes deterioration of parts in the communication equipment. There are measures that can be taken to alleviate the heat build-up.

1. Insure adequate ventilation.
2. Utilize a fan to cool equipment.
3. Keep radio transmissions to a minimum.
4. Provide overhead shelter for the M-577A1.
5. When not transmitting, place the T-195 in the standby position.

Observation: Radio operators and supervisors should be made aware of the measures to be taken to prevent damage to communications equipment in the M-577A1 when operating in a static position.

(14) Item: Frequencies.

Discussion: The frequency spectrum has proven to be extremely crowded in III CTZ. Constant command emphasis and supervision is needed to minimize interference and expedite traffic passage.

Observation: Frequency interference exists, but units can communicate and make effective use of assigned frequencies by observing correct procedures.

b. Training.

Item: Rules of engagement training.

Discussion: Rules of engagement as imposed in parts of Vietnam require the individual soldier to initiate combat under varying conditions and with a variety of weapons. Without specific training oriented towards this type of engagement the results could be detrimental to our efforts in Vietnam.

Observation: COMUS training for Vietnam bound troops should include some of the general rules of engagement i.e. action against snipers in towns, progression of weapons to be used and destruction of homes and huts and why these rules are necessary. Once assigned to a unit in-country the individual should receive further instruction on any rules common only to that unit.

c. Intelligence.

Item: Patrols.

Discussion: Daylight recon patrols and night ambush patrols in the vicinity of both the staging area and base camp have been found to be extremely effective in deterring VC attacks on these areas.

Observation: An aggressive plan for patrolling the areas around base camps will deny the VC opportunities to plan, practice and execute attacks.

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d. CA/PSYOPS.

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(1) Item: Loudspeaker operations.

Discussion: Information received from Viet Cong prisoners and ralliers indicate that loudspeaker missions are not effective when flown above, 2,000 feet or on windy days.

Observation: The altitude and wind activities will have a direct effect on the overall results of loudspeaker missions.

(2) Item: Chieu Hoi Program.

Discussion: Reports continue to come in from the field stating that the Viet Cong do not trust the allied forces in particular the Americans. It is quite apparent that Viet Cong propaganda is still able to influence their thoughts. All the ralliers in LONG KHANH Province during Operation ATLANTA turned themselves in to GVN and ARVN forces.

Observation: Leaders at all echelons of command must be aware of and stress the importance of the Chieu Hoi Program and especially how to identify and handle a rallier.

* Additional lessons listed in Annex C Operation Alexandria

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ANNEX A

21 NOVEMBER AMBUSH NARRATIVE

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NARRATIVE OF THE AMBUSH OF
21 NOVEMBER 1966

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INTRODUCTION (C)

On 21 November 1966 a large convoy escorted by nine Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicles (ACAV's - Modified M113 Armored Personnel Carriers mounting a 50 caliber machine gun with hatch armor and two side mounted M60 machineguns, each with an armored gun shield) was ambushed on National Highway One between BIEN HOA and XUAN LOC (YT 27509980 YT 292097) by elements of two battalions of the Viet Cong 27th Regiment. The escort successfully defended the convoy despite the fact that the VC were well entrenched and employed 57 and 75mm recoilless rifles, mortars, automatic weapons, and small arms and grenades.

BACKGROUND (C)

Operation ATLANTA, which began on 20 October 1966, was the operation in which the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment cleared, secured, and occupied a base camp in the vicinity of LONG GIAC, YT 282100, 12km south of XUAN LOC, RVN. The convoy of 21 November was one of many convoys moving supplies, equipment and men from the staging area to the base camp as Operation ATLANTA progressed.

Units represented in the convoy included Headquarters and Headquarters Troop 11th Armored Cavalry, 36th Military History Detachment, 33rd Chemical Detachment, 11th Armored Cavalry Tactical Air Control Party, 51st Military Intelligence Detachment, 48th Transportation Group, as well as elements of the S1, S2, S3, and S4 staff sections of Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry.

The terrain and vegetation in the area provided good fields of fire and concealment for the ambush force. On the south side of Highway One, where the heaviest concentration of enemy troops was located, the brush, jungle and secondary growth begins at YT 275099 and continues to YT 282100, where an area of grass and banana trees begins (see sketch map). This area continues to YT 292098 where brush and high grass dominate the area. The north side of the road is generally level or with only gentle slopes and consists of high grass vegetation interspersed with low scrub brush, throughout the ambush area.

Less than ten minutes prior to the ambush, an intelligence report was received by S2, 11th Armored Cavalry, indicating that VC forces were in position at what soon proved to be the ambush site. This information was passed immediately to the 1st Squadron, parent unit of the convoy escort platoon.

THE AMBUSH OF 21 NOVEMBER 1966 (C)

The escort commander received warning of the impending ambush when his own vehicle was less than 1,000 yards from the ambush site. All vehicles except the lead ACAV were notified of the impending ambush before the VC commenced firing. As the convoy and escorts passed by the ambush site they employed reconnaissance by fire which was returned by a heavy volume of small arms, automatic weapons, mortar, recoilless rifle, and hand grenade fire.

Approximately one-half of the convoy passed through the killing zone safely before a truck was hit by recoilless rifle fire which stopped and burned in such a position that no other vehicles could pass. Within two minutes the three trucks behind the first one to be hit were destroyed on the road. The two ACAV's closest to the firing moved immediately to protect the trucks under fire engaging the enemy with all their available weapons. This action, combined with the small arms fire returned by the personnel who had dismounted from the trucks when the rear portion of the convoy was forced to halt, kept the enemy elements from overrunning the convoy. After a brief but furious exchange of fire, both of the ACAV's that had come up to protect the trucks took disabling recoilless rifle rounds, and had to be evacuated by their crews, most of whom had become casualties.

As the fire fight was raging in the killing zone, the escort platoon leader organized a hasty escort from three ACAV's in the lead and moved that section of the convoy on towards XUAN LOC. He then immediately turned around, and with one other ACAV, moved at top speed back toward the sound of the guns. Halfway to the burning trucks, the platoon leader was forced to leave the ACAV accompanying his vehicle to act as security for the DUST-OFF helicopter coming in to evacuate

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wounded. As he continued alone his vehicle was struck by a recoilless rifle round which disabled only the radio, on the vehicle, but wounded two crewmen. Before reaching the scene of the action the platoon leader's vehicle engaged the ambush force on both sides of the road until the enemy fire stopped. During this time he adjusted the ordnance delivered by an air-strike, and supervised the evacuation of wounded by DUST-OFF.

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FIRE SUPPORT (U)

There was no artillery fire in support of the ambush fight, however, later in the day artillery was placed to support search and clear operations in the area. There was a total of four firing runs made by armed helicopters and two airstrikes flown in support of the convoy. Later in the day an additional air strike was flown in support of search and clear operations.

The Light Fire Team from the Aviation Platoon, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment placed the following ammunition on the ambush:

1st Firing Run	12 Rockete (2.75 FFAR)
2 UH1B	12,500 rounds 7.62 M3 (+)
2nd Firing Run	18 Rockete
3 UH1B	12,500 rounds 7.62 M3
3rd Firing Run	10 Rockete
3 UH1B	12,500 rounds 7.62 M3
4th Firing Run	2 Rockete
3 UH1B	12,500 rounds 7.62 M3
	42 Rockete
TOTAL	50,000 rounds 7.62 (+)

The Air Force delivered the following ordnance on the site of the ambush:

1st Air Strike	6-500 pound bombs
Flight of 3 F100's	6-750 pound napalm bombs
	7200 rounds 20mm
2nd Air Strike	2-500 pound bombs
Flight of 2 F5's	2-750 pound bombs
	2-Type 2A CBU clusters

RESULTS

(U) Enemy losses included:

Personnel:

KIA (BC)	30
KIA (POSS)	75 - 100

Equipment:

57mm Recoilless Rifle	1
AKA 47 Assault Rifle and Tripod	1
RPG-2 AT Rockete	2
RED AT hand grenade	1
Stick grenades	35
Tail fin assemblies from expended RPG-2	2
AT rockete	3
75mm RR Casings	3

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Unfired 57mm RR HEAT Rounds	8
Expendable 57mm RR casings	6
Expendable booster charge casings for RPD	2
Sets of web equipment and camouflage	10
Aidman's medical kit with splints	1

Documents identifying 1st Bn, 274, and 2nd Bn,
274th VC Regiment were taken from bodies.

(C) Friendly losses included:

Personnel:

KIA	7
MIA	8

Equipment:

ACAV's destroyed	2
2½ ton trucks destroyed	4

CONCLUSIONS (C)

Information obtained from documents found on the VC bodies indicated elements of the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 274th VC Regiment comprised the ambush force.

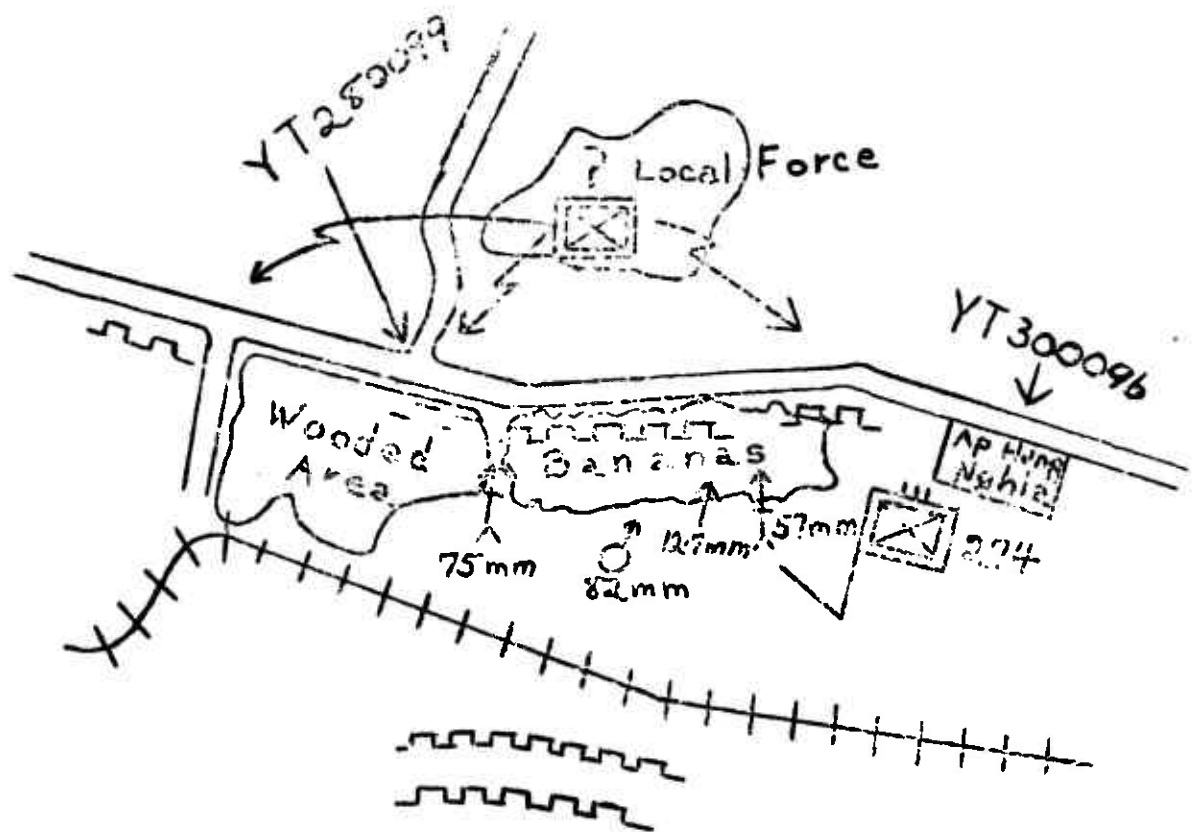
Though the VC destroyed 2 combat and 4 administrative vehicles the convoy was not overrun, despite the fact that the major portion of the enemy force only had to contend with the small arms of the escorted personnel and two ACAV's. This was determined by three factors:

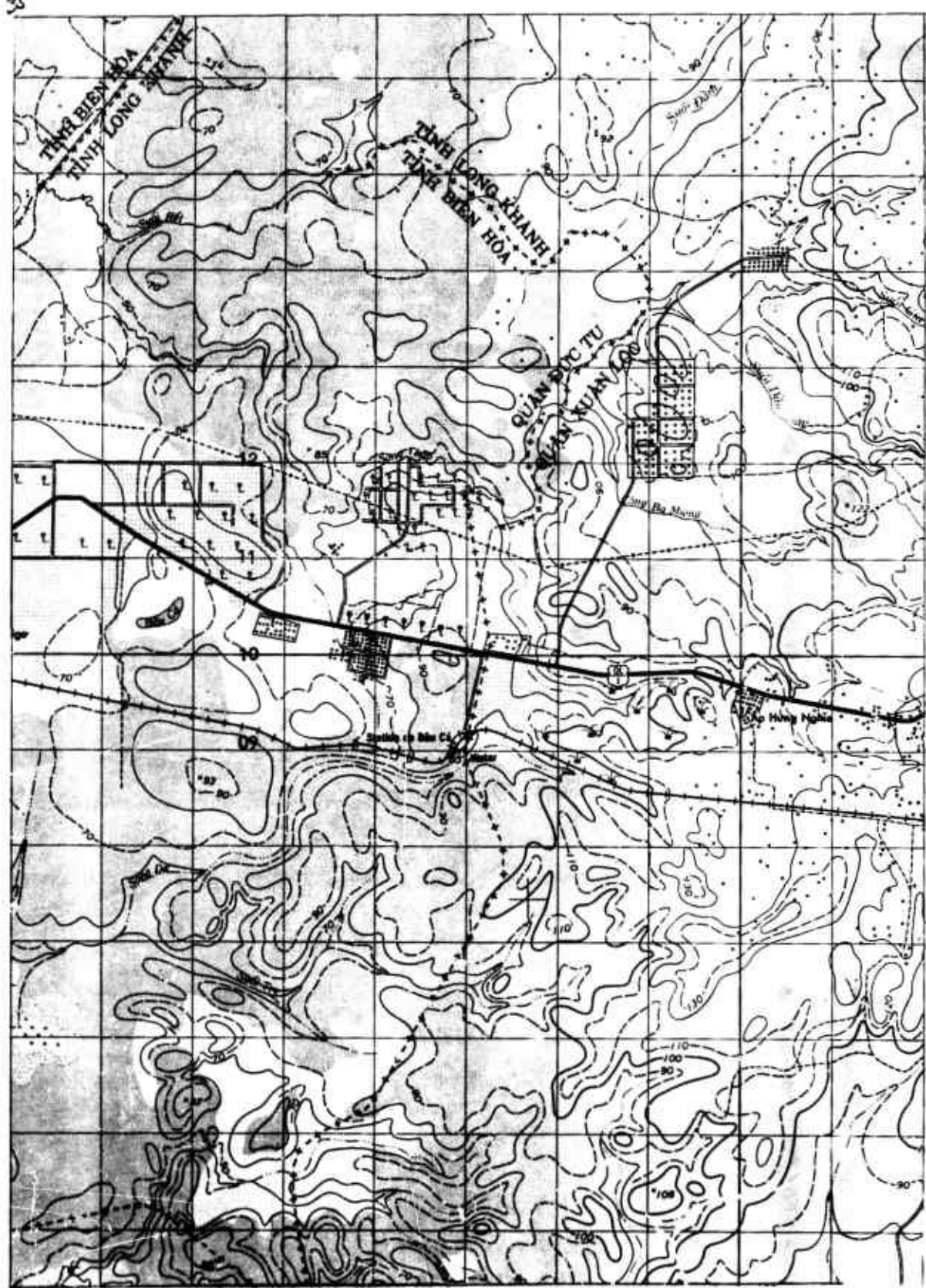
First was the counter fire from the ambushed column, which began as soon as the trucks stopped.

Second was the fact that the escort unit was warned of the ambush and entered the killing zone firing their automatic weapons. This undoubtedly inflicted casualties on the enemy and may well have caused the VC to initiate the ambush prematurely.

Third it must be accepted that the tremendous volume of fire put out by the ACAV's was instrumental in causing the VC to break contact and flee.

Sketch Map





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ANNEX B

2 DECEMBER AMBUSH NARRATIVE

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NARRATIVE OF THE AMBUSH OF 2 DECEMBER 1966

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INTRODUCTION (C)

On 2 December 1966 elements (resupply convoy) of the 1st Squadron were ambushed by the 275th Viet Cong Main Force Regiment on National Highway 1 northeast of SUOI CAT. The ensuing action dramatically displayed the epitome of proper counterambush techniques and actions. So violent was the execution of the counterambush that within 70 minutes the squadron had rendered the 275th VC Regiment ineffective as a fighting force without the loss of a single trooper. This one action assisted immeasurably in paving the way for more extensive operations by the Blackhorse Regiment to the north and east of VO DAT.

BACKGROUND (C)

Operation ATLANTA began on 20 October 1966 with the 1st Squadron conducting a clear and secure operation along National Highway 1 from BIEN HOA to XUAN LOC and securing the site of the Regiment's permanent base camp south of XUAN LOC. Operation ATLANTA was not only conceived on the idea of carving out a piece of real estate and building a base camp, but in opening up and securing roads and permitting the flow of civilian commerce throughout the provinces around XUAN LOC. Once the base camp area had been secured, search and destroy and ROADRUNNER operations were conducted toward VO DAT along National Highway 1, and Interprovincial 333, and south from the base camp on Interprovincial Route 2 to the 1st ATF TAOR.

Convoys with supplies, equipment and troops continued to arrive from the LONG BINH staging area in ever increasing amounts throughout the remainder of October and the entire month of November. On 2 November the Regiment began providing security for a company from the 27th Engineer Battalion (C) in the vicinity of GIA RAY adjacent to National Highway 1 at the base of CHUA CHAN Mountain.

Viet Cong activities in the 11th Armored Cavalry's area of operation were relatively minor in nature during the month of November except for the ambush of 21 November. On 27 and 28 November the Regiment received RED HAZE reports of approximately 80 emissions south of National Highway 1 (vic YT 2010 - 2410 - 2407 - 2007) and agent reports of movements north and south of National Highway 1 in the vicinity of SOUI CAT and CHUA CHAN Mountain. On the 29th the 1st Squadron moved into the area of the reported activity and conducted a zone reconnaissance north and south of Highway 1 as far as GIA RAY remaining overnight, returning the next day without contact. On the same day the 1st Squadron returned to the base camp, a FAC from the 18th ARVN Division (Formerly the 10th Division) reported receiving automatic weapons fire and observed an estimated Viet Cong battalion off Interprovincial Route 2 vicinity of KA BANG (YS 4285). Shortly thereafter a second report was received, this one from XUAN LOC subsector indicating another Viet Cong battalion was located (YT 3405 to YT 3498) west of XUAN LOC approximately 8 kilometers. The 2nd Squadron was immediately dispatched to check the reported activity to the south on Interprovincial Route 2 while the 1st Squadron moved to the west on Highway 1 to search the other suspected area. Both operations produced negative contact.

The 1st and 2nd Squadrons returned to the base camp resuming their mission of base camp security. The next day Troop B relieved elements of the 2nd Squadron providing security for the GIA RAY rock quarry. Agent reports still indicated enemy activity around GIA RAY. Consequently, reaction forces were continually on the alert and each convoy's movement was closely scrutinized.

The terrain in the area of the ambush is gentle, sloping to the southeast from the commanding terrain in the area, Chua Chan Mountain (elevation 837m). Drainage flows from the mountain to the northeast to the southeast. The highway is flanked by elephant grass on both sides turning into heavy secondary growth approximately 60 meters off the road. The initial area of contact was flanked to the west by a portion of a rubber plantation. Trafficability was limited once the vehicles entered the undergrowth. However, it did not impede the advance of the Blackhorse Troopers. The weather was hot and clear continuing throughout the night and the next day.

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THE AMBUSH OF 2 DECEMBER 1966 (C)

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On the second of December Troop B plus a platoon of tanks from Company D were securing the site of the rock quarry while Troop A manned the squadron's sector of the base camp perimeter. A resupply convoy had arrived earlier in the day at the base camp and was on its way back to the rock quarry when it was ambushed at 1640 hours by an estimated 2 battalion Viet Cong forces. The area selected by the enemy for the ambush is located on a stretch of Highway 1 that has come to be known as "Ambush Alley" (YT 602064 to YT 629084 along Highway 1) (see sketch 1). The convoy, consisting of 2 tanks, 3 ACAV's and 2 2½ ton trucks, reacted violently to the attack with the armored vehicles escorting the two trucks out of the killing zone then returning immediately to rake the entire killing zone with 90mm canister, 50 Cal and 7.62 machinegun fire, grenades and M-16 fire (see sketch 2).

Word of the ambush was received by the 1st Squadron units in the base camp and Troop B located 5 kilometers north of the ambush at the rock quarry. Within seven minutes after the squadron received the information, Company D (-) was on the move towards the ambush to be followed 10 minutes later by Troop C. Meanwhile Troop B had arrived at the ambush site, moving right into the killing zone smothering the Viet Cong positions, many of which were only off the shoulder of road, with withering fire. A Viet Cong recoilless rifle round hit one of the tanks knocking off the commander's cupola, but it did not deter the crew as they continued to fight and in the ensuing battle fired every round of 90mm on the tank.

By this time the tanks of Company D began to arrive on scene having traveled 22 kilometers in 25 minutes, commenced moving through the ambush zone raking one side of the highway while Troop B worked over the other side. Howitzer Battery which followed Troop C and was in turn followed by Troop A 45 minutes later, moved into a fire support position near SOU CAT. Once Troop C reached the ambush site it moved through the killing zone firing everything it had, and taking up positions on Highway 1 beyond the RD of 333 and 1 in an effort to seal off the Viet Cong's routes of withdrawal.

The Viet Cong apparently thinking that Troop C was the last of the reinforcements began to fire again on the road only to be caught in a crossfire between the on-charging Troop A and the tanks of Company D. This fire fight lasted about ten minutes then Charlie began to lose his taste for combat with the Troopers of the Blackhorse. Troop A moved into positions astride Highway 1 west of Troop B while Troop C shifted further south in an attempt to block the Viet Cong's escape routes (see sketch 3).

Reinforcing fire was provided both from the ground by the 54th Artillery Group and fighter aircraft based at XIEM HOA directed by the Regiment's FAC personnel observing the ambush site from overhead. Further support was provided by the Squadron's light fire team and aircraft from the Regimental Aviation Platoon.

The Viet Cong had dug-in and covered positions on both sides of the road (see sketch 2) covering the killing zone with heavy and light machineguns, 60mm mortars, at least one 75mm recoilless rifle and small arms. Viet Cong forces were also positioned close to the shoulder of the road with grenades, with the apparent hope of damaging the suspension systems of the ACAV's and tanks which proved to be fruitless. They did however, provide lucrative targets for the grenadiers on the passing ACAV's as they dropped their hand grenades and fired their M79 launchers with deadly accuracy.

At 1750 hours contact was broken by the Viet Cong with only sporadic firing continuing until 1950 hours. In order to seal off the escape routes to the south (see sketch 3) a combination of artillery and air support was utilized to fire throughout the night on suspected avenues of withdrawal (trails, stream beds, ridge lines). Illumination and suppressing fires were delivered by rotating ACH? "Spook" ships over the area until morning light. An initial check of the area indicated the VC had 88 KIA (90) in the 70 minute encounter with the "First of the Blackhorses".

After remaining in position all night along the road the 1st Squadron started to clear the ambush site, sending dismounted patrols approximately 200 meters off the road. Mounted patrols conducted search and clear operations on the trails traveling 10 kilometers into the jungle. To further tighten the knot around the area the 3rd Squadron moved from the base camp assuming the 1st Squadron's blocking positions while the 1st made a sweep of the area. A forward CP from the

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Regiment was also moved into the area to facilitate command and control of the operations. As the clearing operation progressed the Viet Cong body count climbed, reaching 99 with at least another 100 KIA (POSS). At approximately 1630 hours the 3rd Squadron and Regimental CP moved back to the base camp leaving the 1st Squadron to continue their clearing of the area.

FIRE SUPPORT (U)

At the time of the ambush there were no preplanned fires or air strikes, however, within ten minutes after the ambush started, supporting fires from fighter aircraft and the 54th Artillery Group were on the way. Thus providing Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron enough time to position itself at SOU CAT where it was able to provide direct support for the entire ambush area. Prior to darkness a Battery from the 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery was dispatched from XUAN LOC to provide further support. Highway 1 was established as the fire coordination line (see sketch 4) with the air strikes directed to the east and south of the highway and the artillery to the west and north. FAC personnel from the Regiment directed, in coordination with the ground commander, seven air strikes from their light observation aircraft observing the ambush site. CBU's, 250 pound bombs, napalm and 20mm cannons were directed into the area uprooting trees and cutting huge gouges out of the jungle below. During the hours of darkness a ACH7 "Spook" ship was continually overhead providing illumination and suppressing fires on request and as targets of opportunity appeared. Supplementing the above mentioned fire support were light fire teams from the 1st Squadron and Regiment. The light fire team from the 1st Squadron personally bagged at least 5 Viet Cong when it caught a group of them in the open.

A total of 22 sorties were flown as follows:

A01 -	3
F5 -	5
F100 -	10
ACH7 -	4

Ordnance expended included:

CBU	3 cannisters
Bomb, 500 lbs	16
Bomb, 750 lbs	6
Napalm, 750 lbs	22
FFAR, 2.75"	76
20mm (HEI)	10,000 rds
30 Caliber	15,000 rds

There was a minimum of one FAC overhead at all times and at some times as many as 3 in the air at once. Continuous communications were maintained with the ground commander for the duration of the ambush.

Artillery direct support was provided by Howitzer Battery 1st Squadron. Reinforcing fires were provided by Battery B (1553P), 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery. A total of 1700 rounds were fired in support of the operation.

RESULTS

(U) Enemy losses included:

Personnel:

KIA (BC)	99
KIA (POSS)	100-150
VCC	3

Equipment:

75mm RR	1
7.62 Hvy MG	1
7.62 Lt MG (Type 58)	1

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7.62 Lt MD (Type 56)	4
AK 47 Assault Rifle	3
Chicom Carbine w/Bayonet	1
B40 RPG2 Rocket Launcher	1
60mm Mortar	1
R59 Sub MD	1
Carbine M2 (US)	1
Small Arms Ammunition	1500 rounds
Grenade (Fragmentation & Concussion)	45
RKG AT grenade	2
Mortar Ammunition (60mm)	15

(C) Friendly losses included:

Personnel:

KIA - 1 (27th Engr Bn)

WIA - 22

Equipment:

ACAV (destroyed) - 1

Tand M48A3 (damaged) - 1

CONCLUSIONS (C)

A search of the ambush area and information obtained from captured documents and prisoners indicated that the 275th VC Regt (Main Force) reinforced with heavy weapons sprung the ambush which 70 minutes later turned into a disastrous defeat. The decisive defeat of the Viet Cong can be attributed to several things:

First and foremost is that at no time in the ambush was the Viet Cong able to gain control of the situation even though he had the advantages of surprise and fortified positions. The violent reaction by the escort force completely stripped him of any advantages he might have had. Once out of the killing zone the escort force minus the trucks charged head long down the road belching fire on both sides of the road. This spontaneous action held at bay the attacking force until the reaction forces arrived.

Secondly, the rapid reaction of the remainder of the squadron in reaching the ambush site within 25 minutes after traveling a distance of approximately 22 km.

Third, the immediate establishment of a fire coordination line (Highway 1) thus permitting maximum utilization of both air and ground supporting fires.

Fourth, the ability of the convoy to withstand the initial shock and then be able to retaliate so effectively.

The final results might have been even better if it had stayed light another two hours. However, weather conditions did not limit the ability of control personnel to place effective fire on the enemy positions.

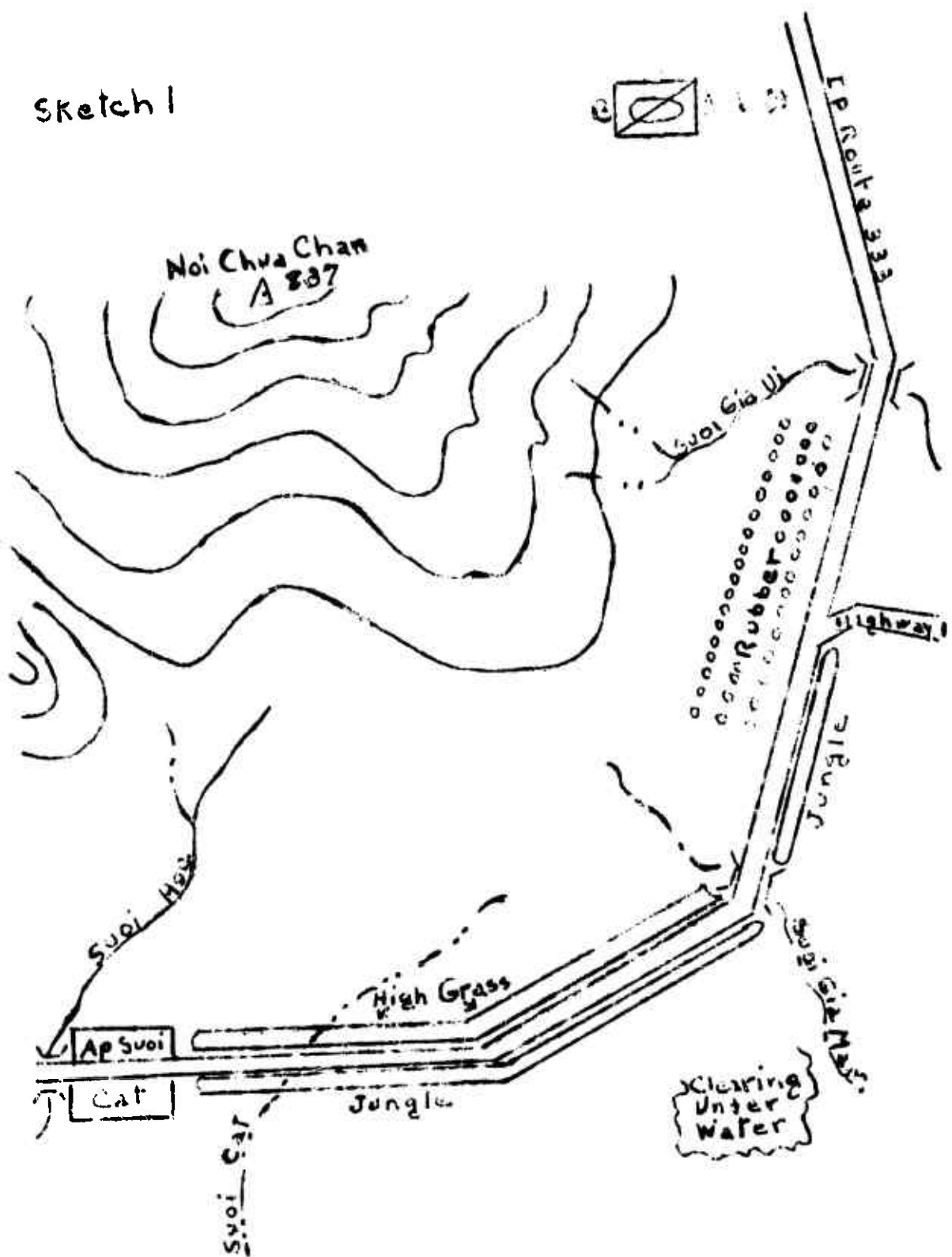
Inclosures:

Sketch map 1, Sketch map 2, Sketch map 3, Sketch map 4, and Topographic Map.

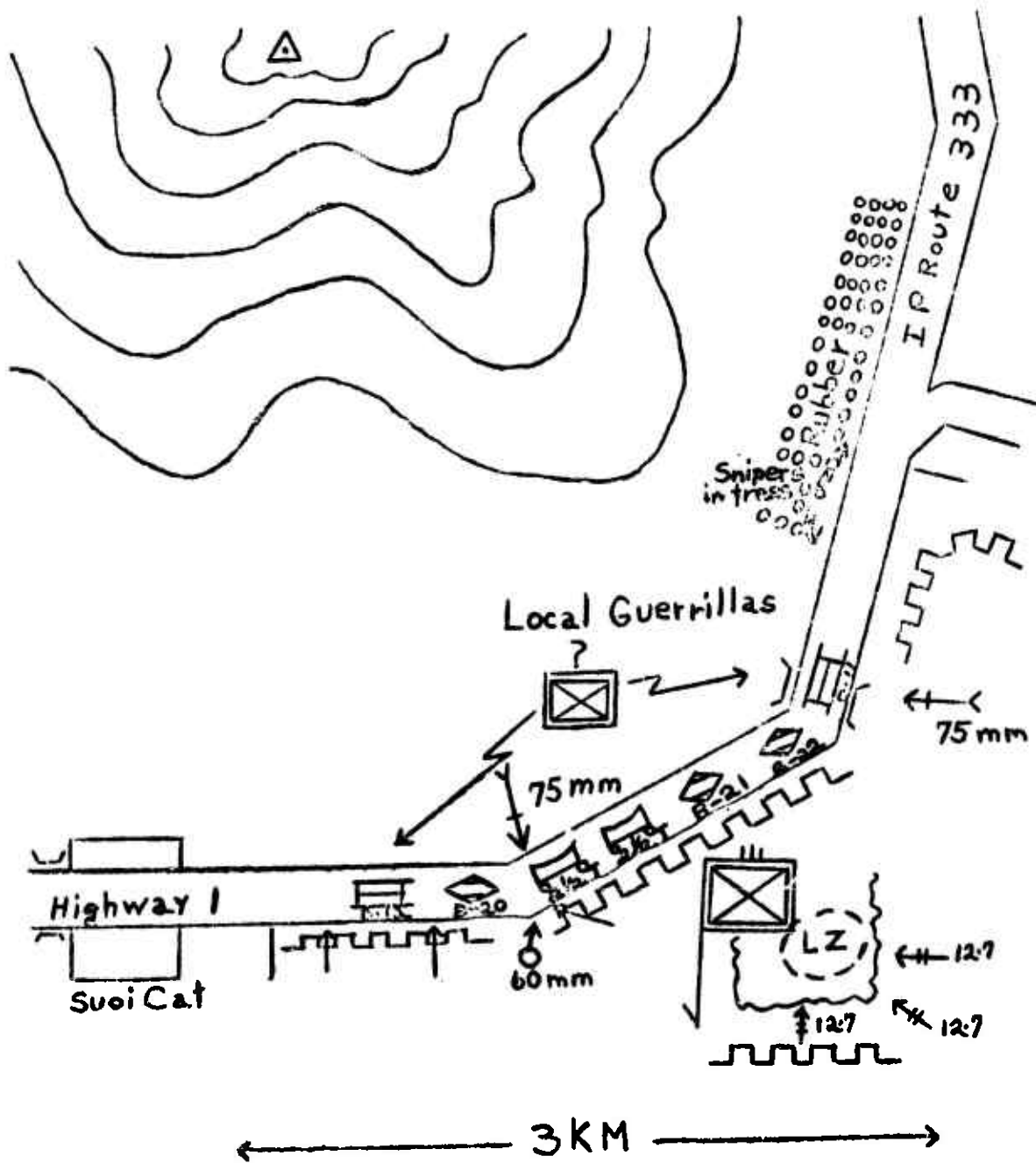
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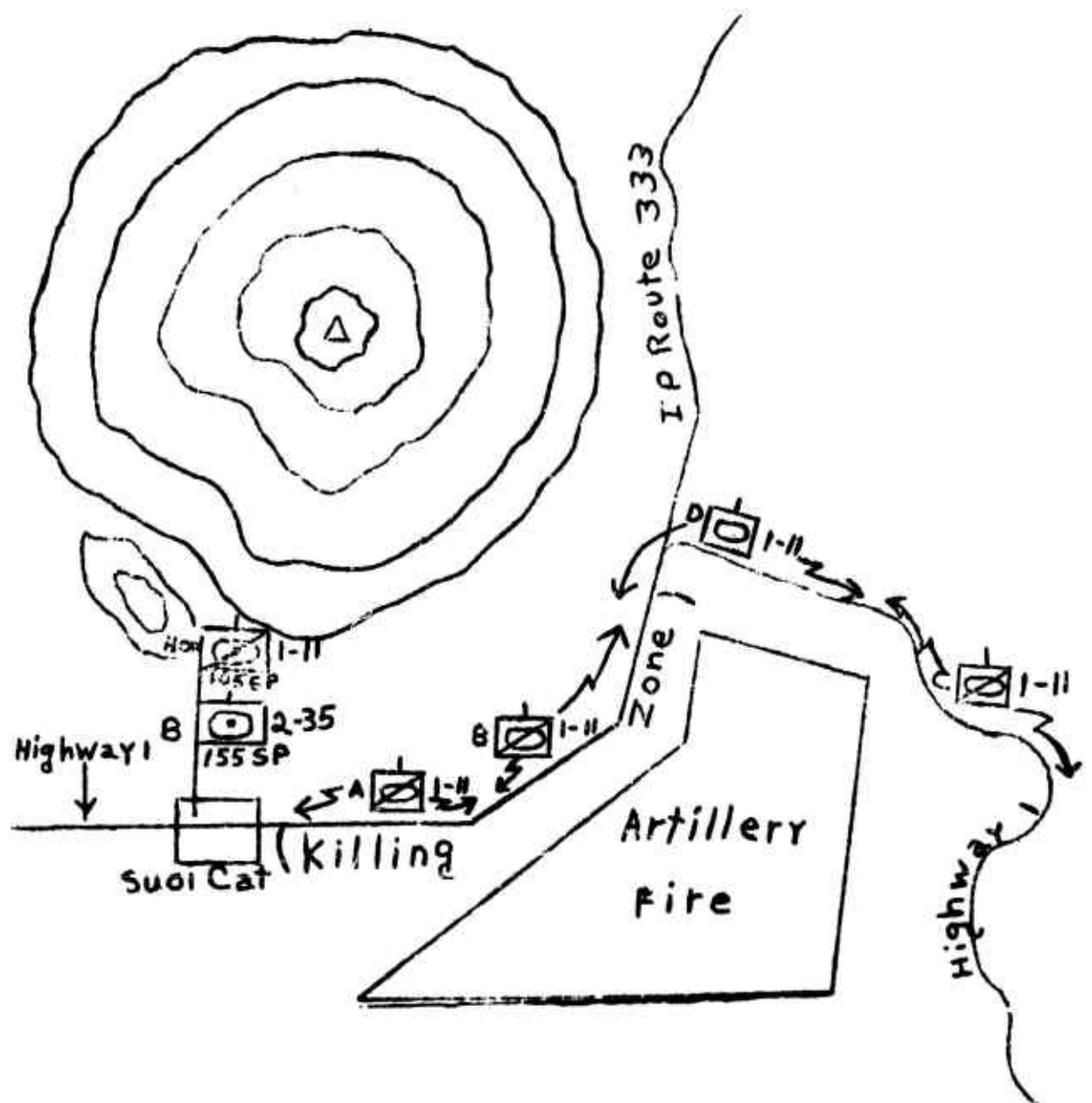
Sketch 1



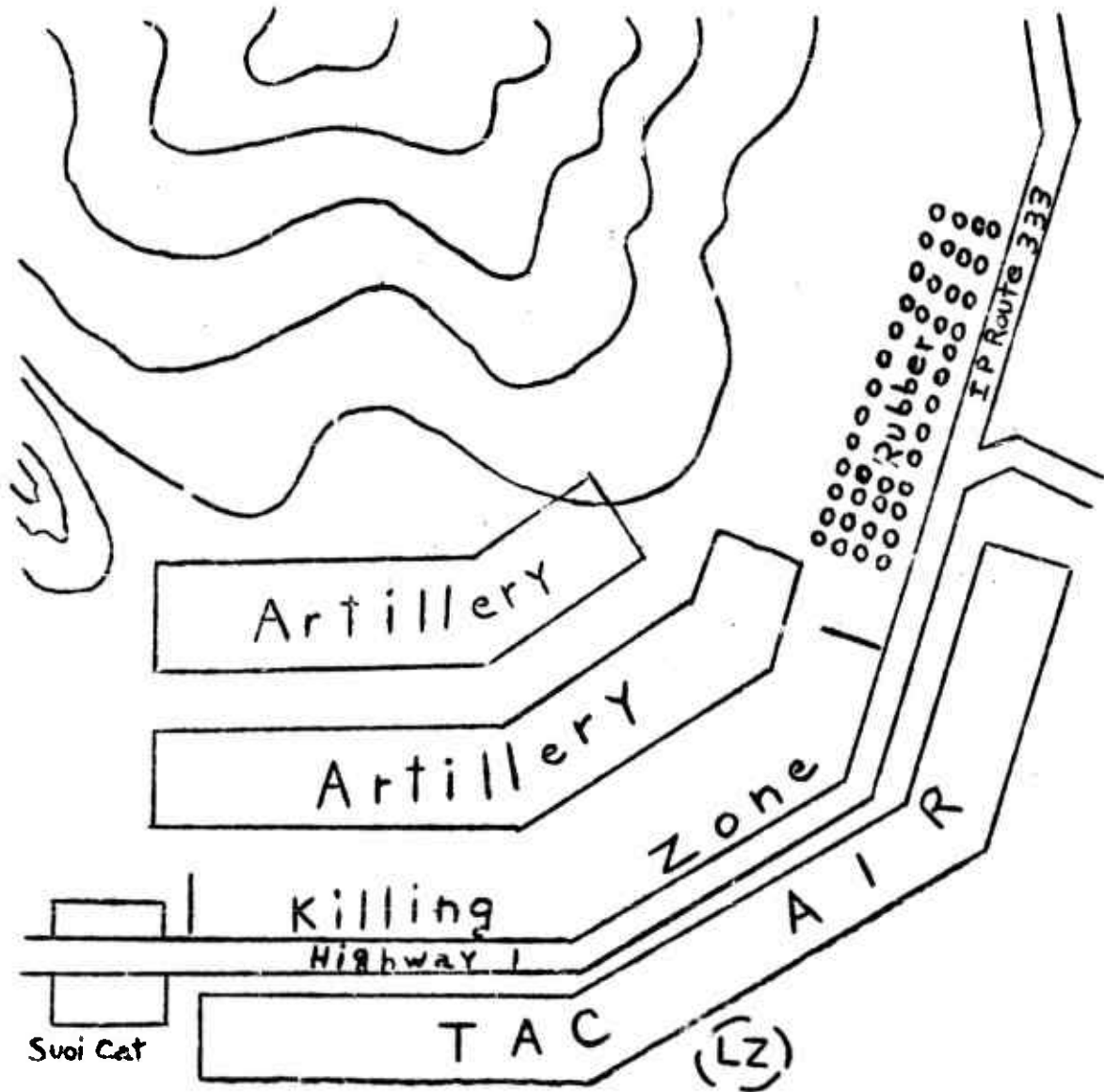
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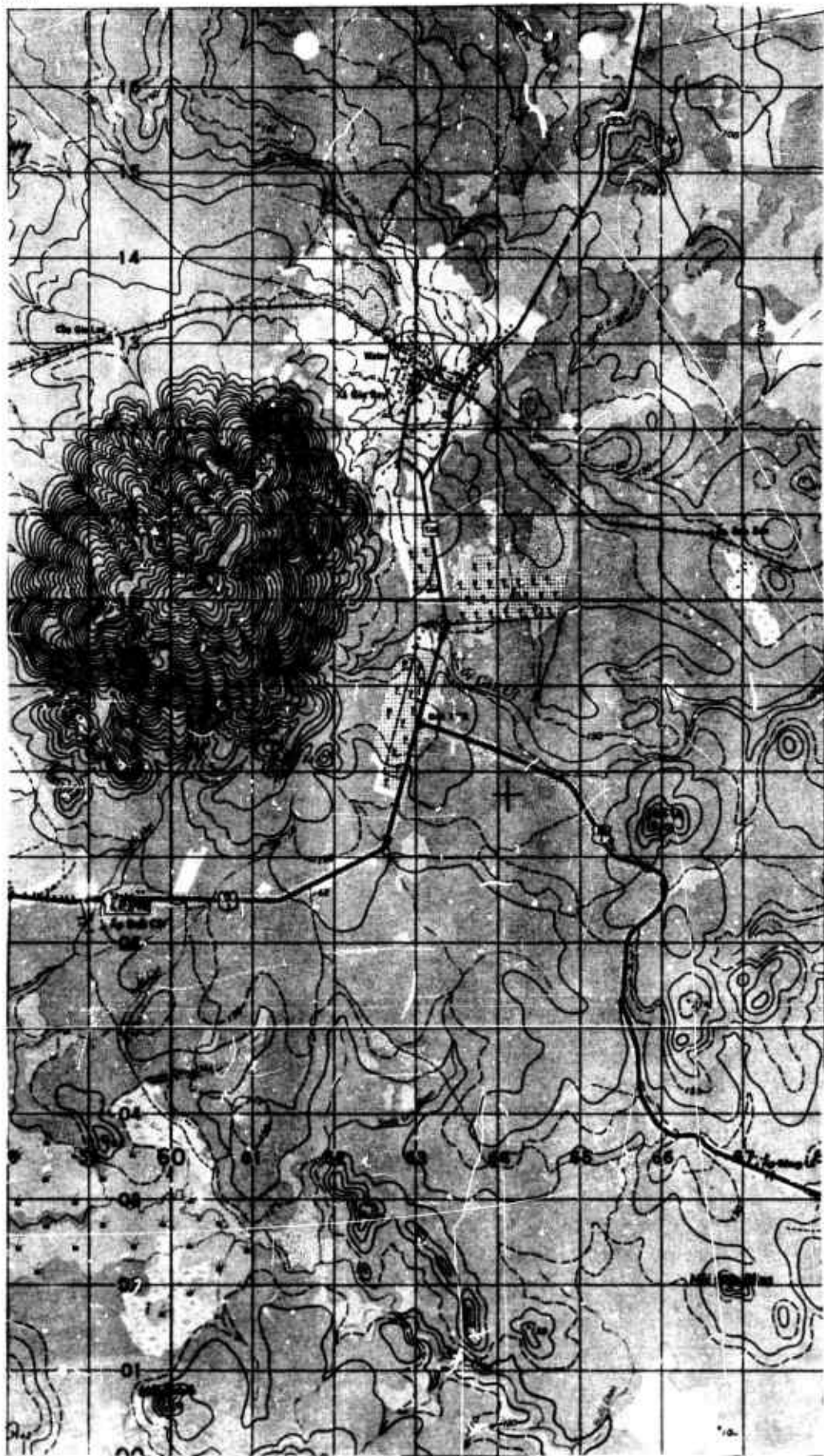


Sketch 3



Sketch 4





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ANNEX C

AFTER ACTION REPORT - OPERATION ALEXANDRIA

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COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION ALEXANDRIA

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References:

OPORD 09-66 (OPERATION ALEXANDRIA), Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 2 Dec 66.

1. NAMES OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION.

a. OPERATION ALEXANDRIA

b. Search and Destroy.

2. DATES OF OPERATION. 041030 - 051957 Dec 66.

3. LOCATION. DUC THANH and XUAN LOC PROVINCES.

4. CONTROL HEADQUARTERS. 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

5. REPORTING OFFICER. LTC Palmer A. Peterson.

6. TASK ORGANIZATION. See Annex A.

7. SUPPORTING FORCES.

a. Air Support

(1) Preplanned air strikes: There were two preplanned air strikes at 050700 Dec on suspected VC routes of withdrawal. Its effectiveness could not be judged because of the dense vegetation in the strike area.

(2) Immediate air strikes: There was one immediate air strike at 051100 Dec called in by Tm I to reduce enemy machine gun and small arms fire. The strike which followed artillery and an assault by two light fire teams reduced the volume of fire to the extent where ground elements could effect a search.

b. Squadron and Regimental Aviation.

(1) A total of 25 hours and 40 minutes of air time was recorded by helicopter pilots flying in support of the ground action. 13 hours 50 minutes were recorded in UH-1B aircraft and 11 hours 50 minutes were recorded in OH-230 aircraft that flew FO's and other observers.

(2) A total of four strikes were recorded. Three by the Third Squadron light fire team and one by the Second Squadron light fire team. Targets were enemy routes of withdrawal from the objective area, tunnels and bunkers. The assaults were observed to be most effective in suppressing enemy fires from those positions.

(3) The following Ordnance was expended:

(a) 2.75" air to ground rockets - 37

(b) 7.62mm linked - 6,000 rounds

c. Other Aviation.

(1) Two Dust Offs were completed for this operation.

(2) 68 hours were flown by 10 UH-1B aircraft of the 68th Aviation Support Company. The company air-lifted the 43rd Infantry into objective Alpha and out at the end of the day. Also, these elements were used to evacuate 600 VCS to an interrogation point six kilometers from objective A.

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SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RVC: MACV J3-32(Cont))

d. Artillery

(1) General: Artillery support for the operation was supplied by three sources.

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(a) Howitzer Battery 3d Squadron fired the following missions:

1. 050200 to 050300 Dec. H&I was fired in various areas. 40 rds HE were fired. It was unobserved, effectiveness unknown.

2. 050515 to 050715. 297 rds HE and 42 rds WP were fired for preparatory fires and to seal off the objective areas. It was unobserved and results unknown; however, based on the number of VCS detained it can be assumed that it was effective in helping to establish the seal.

3. 050600 Dec. 2 rds of WP were fired as a navigational aid to Tm I.

4. 050900 Dec. 366 rds HE and 48 rds WP were fired for a blocking barrage which was requested by S-3. An FO observed and reported the fire effectively blocked avenues of escape.

5. 051045 to 051400. 395 rds of HE and 32 rds WP were fired for combined assault on line by Tm I, Tm K and Tm L. At one point on this mission a dead space was encountered in a deep draw. The assault elements could not effectively clear the area without halting the assault. Howitzer Battery effectively slowed their advance and was able to completely fill the draw with fire and reduce enemy harassment from that position.

6. 051630 to 051645 Dec. 137 rds HE and 13 rds WP were fired by the 105 Battery and 155 Battery massed as a final protective fire for Tm I and Tm L as they withdrew from the area. This was a TOT mission. Artillery batteries are not usually located together in Vietnam to allow them to mass their forces in this way. However, the mission was effectively accomplished.

b. B Battery 2/35 Artillery 155MM SP fired 454 rds HE and 10 rds WP in missions ranging from H&I to a TOT. As this battery has a range of 3 to 4 miles and its effect on a target is three times that of a 105, the battery provided a valuable asset to the operation.

c. Provisional Mortar Battery, composed of the mortars in the Armored Cavalry Troop massed in one battery, fired four H&I missions in the vicinity of objective Alpha. As a supplement to our Howitzer Battery and a second source of indirect fire the Provisional Mortar Battery is very valuable.

8. INTELLIGENCE

a. Prior to Operation: Numerous sources, 1st Australian Task Force, Phuoc Tuy Province and Sector Headquarters, Duc Thanh Advisor and aerial observation all indicated that an unknown local force was operating in the area. Countless incidents of sniper fire, mines, road cuts and tax collection points had been reported by these sources. It was suspected that the local force units provided cuts to allow the 274 and 275 VC Regiments to cross Interprovincial Highway #2. They also served as guides to the Regiments when in the area.

The S-2 American advisor in Phuoc Tuy Province further indicated that the area could harbor a transient VC Base Camp as there were tunnels and trenches sighted on several occasions, and the fortifications were on a VC east-west route of movement.

b. Value of prior intelligence: Prior intelligence was a valuable indication of what might be expected in the area. Expected terrain limitations came as no surprise and full advantage was taken of those areas where we knew armored vehicles could operate best. The 43 ARVN Inf Bn was requested to cope with expected unfavorable terrain where it existed and to provide a search element for widely dispersed and isolated huts in objective A. Prior intelligence from aerial observation allowed for preplanned artillery to be placed on expected routes of enemy withdrawal. Actual enemy resistance did exceed that which was expected and planned for.

c. Intelligence during the operation: Intelligence gained from OPERATION ALEXANDRIA definitely identified the local force to be local force Company C-20. Of the 42 confirmed VC captured, interrogators found one who was a member of the 274th VC Regiment. Documents collected have not been fully evaluated but one revealed the location of a VC mine field.

Tunnels and bunkers indicated a defensive position and verified suspicions that the area was utilized as a transient Base Camp.

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SUBJECT: Combat Operat. After Action Report (RVC: MA J3-32(Cont)

9. **MISSION.** To conduct search and destroy operation 050609 December 1966, via YS445852, Cam My 2 (YS465858), Ap Hsin (YS462825) to seize VC and VCS in area.

10. **CONCEPT OF OPERATION:**

a. **Maneuvers:** To conduct opn in 3 phases:

(1) Phase I: Atk on 2 directions of atks to seal obj's A and B. Securs landing zones for 43 Inf (ARVN) (-).
(2) Phase II: Cont to seal obj's A and B. 43 Inf (ARVN) clears obj's A and B. VC and VCS airlifted to sector interrogation center vic YS464782.

(3) Phase III: On order, Tm M cont atk to search obj C; Tm L cont atk to search obj D.

b. **Fires:**

(1) Arty: Pri of fire Tm I init; Tm K on order. Prep H-30 to H-hour to seal obj A and B.

(2) TAC Air: On call.

11. **EXECUTION**

General: Headquarters 3d Sqdn 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment issued OPORD 09-66 (OPERATION ALEXANDRIA) on 2 Dec 1966 assigning the mission as stated in paragraph 9 above. On 211800 Dec all unit commanders were briefed on the mission. At 021500 Dec coordination was made with the participating ARVN unit. The Squadron Commander, 8-3, a liaison officer and the Regimental 2 traveled to Ba Ria on 2 Dec to effect coordination with Phouc Tuy officials and American Advisors, the Battalion Commander of the 43 ARVN Infantry, and Liaison officer of the 68th Airmobiles Company. On 4 Dec liaison was made with B 2/35 Arty.

4 December 1966

At 041400 Dec, Bow Battery displaced to the Coutaney Rubber Plantation at YS458920 in preparation to fire H&I fires and direct support missions on 5 Dec 66.

Tm L mounted, moved south on route Black at 041745 Dec and from YS438956 to YS443915 the team dismounted and took position on either side of Route 2 to secure that portion of the route for the road march on 5 Dec. Tm L occupied these positions by 041846 Dec. The Tm L vehicles returned to Bass Camp, after the dismounted personnel took position.

5 December 1966

Phase I of the operation commenced at 0515 hrs with Bowitzer Battery and B Battery 2/35 Artillery conducting preparatory fires in objectives A & B to seal the area until the teams could take position.

At 0515 Tm K crossed SP and proceeded south on route BLACK travelling south to effect a seal on objective Alpha. Tm L brought its vehicles to the positions it occupied on route BLACK. The team mounted and proceeded south to complete the seal on objective Alpha. Tm L brought its vehicles to the positions it occupied on route BLACK. The team mounted and proceeded south to complete the seal on objective Alpha.

Provisional Mortar Battery followed in march order and displaced to the south on route BLACK to YS457840 where the Battery was laid.

3/919 Engineers was last in march order, and took up position with Provisional Mortar Battery.

At 0545 How Battery stopped preparatory fires and started interdiction fires on suspected route of withdrawal from objectives A & B.

At 0630 Tm K had completed the seal on objective Bravo. Tm I reported the portion of the seal for objective Alpha was complete at 0647. At 0656 the first lift, one company of the 43rd Infantry (ARVN) was on the landing zone. At 0709 Tm M reported they were in position and were sealing their position and completed the seal at 0735.

Phase II. At 0640 Tm K commenced a search of area Bravo. The search in objective Bravo revealed several posters and leaflets which were anti-American. At coordinates YS465850 in the vicinity of a concrete plantation house Tm K found a 30 meter long tunnel. By 0729 Tm K had taken about 150 VCS and requested air evacuation for the suspects so that they could be taken to the interrogation point at Binh Gia. At 0745 Tm K reported having located 2000 pounds of peanuts which they destroyed.

The third lift of the 43 Infantry was completed at 0800. At this time the ARVN Force moved east from the landing zone at YS417862 and moved into objective Alpha to initiate a search of the area.

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followed by Tm I, Tm L and Tm K. By 1957, all elements had closed on Base Camp.

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12. Results:

a. Friendly

- (1) Personnel
US - 2 KIA, 10 WIA.
- (2) Equipment (Damaged or lost)
2 tanks suffered track and suspension damage.
1 M-79 lost.

b. Enemy

- (1) Personnel
 - (a) 4 VC KIA (BC)
 - (b) 2 VC WIA (Confirmed)
 - (c) 0 VC KBA
 - (d) 600 VCS captured.
 - (e) 42 VCC detained.
- (2) Tunnels and Fortifications
 - (a) 24 major tunnels were found.
 - (b) 2 fortified positions were explored. Punjii stakes, booby traps, spider holes and anti-aircraft were among the defenses employed.
 - (c) None of the tunnels or fortifications could be completely destroyed as it would have required major engineer effort equipment and time not available to the Squadron.
 - (d) Captured and/or destroyed.
 - 4100 lbs of peanuts destroyed.
 - 13 1/2 tons of rice destroyed.
 - 2 1/2 tons of rice evacuated.
 - 70 Chicom stick grenades destroyed.
 - 2 claymores destroyed.
 - 2 Pressure type anti-tank mines captured.

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: As OPERATION ALEXANDRIA involved only a single day, problems in administrative procedures were at a minimum. Some of the following areas are worthy of comment.

a. Treatment of Casualties: Tm I suffered a KIA early in the action; However, evacuation could not be effected for several hours. Dustoff would not evacuate a KIA even though the body could easily have been placed on a dustoff ship when it was in the area to evacuate a wounded soldier. The UH-1B's organic to the Squadron could not evacuate the body due to the extreme weight of the Ordance carried by the aircraft.

A swifter method will have to be devised for KIA evacuation. Not only is the presence of a dead comrade a definite morale factor, but the body creates a handicap when the unit must move rapidly and frequently. Units must be ready to evacuate casualties or KIA by armored ambulances to a safe landing zone for pick-up.

b. Communications: In future operations the Squadron would like to switch all airborne communications to the admin/log net as traffic becomes extreme on the command net. At one time a request for dustoff and a request for a fire mission were in competition with each other, indicating a need for established priorities on radio traffic.

14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.

The only item of equipment that met full combat utilization for the first time was the M132 Flame Thrower. The ability of this weapon to burn thick brush and route a hidden enemy is unequalled. It is such a valuable weapon when readily available to the troop that it is felt that two M132's should be organic to each troop.

15. COMMANDER ANALYSIS: OPERATION ALEXANDRIA was most successful in terms of physical damage inflicted upon the enemy, numbers of confirmed VC captured, and the psychological advantage gained by easily entering an enemy stronghold and establishing our control in the area. Further, indispensable intelligence was gained about activities and operations in the Regiments TAOR. The stores and fortifications found definitely established the area as a staging area used by the 5th VC Division for east-west movement. The single most important success was the capture of important local VC leaders who gave valuable information on terrorist rings and infrastructure of the area. The operation also provided the opportunity to assault entrenched positions, utilize the Squadron's tunnel rats, and exercise the proceeding and evacuation of prisoners and documents. The troops also encountered punjii stakes and other booby traps.

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Tm I and Tm M started searching in the vicinity of their blocking positions and at 0820 Tm I discovered a large number of inter-connecting tunnels running under houses. Smoke was placed in the tunnels and "tunnel rats", recently trained in the Squadron entered the tunnels for a detailed search.

At 0825 sniper fire wounded a tank commander and loader in the head at coordinates YS438848. Dustoff was called for at that location by Tm I.

Tm I called in a light fire team to make a run on the location that the sniper fire came from. The air observer and S3 called in artillery to fire a blocking barrage to seal the area while Tm I searched the position. At 0905 Tm I made further contact with heavy volumes of machine gun and small arms fire at YS438848. The light fire team made an assault on the position but artillery was not used due to aircraft in the area.

High performance aircraft was also kept on stand-by pending the completion of Dustoff. One attempt at Dustoff failed at 0904 when the aircraft suffered tail damage from hostile fire and was forced to land at Bass Camp. At 0920 the wounded tank commander died, and Tm I requested the body be evacuated.

To the south of objective Alpha where Tm M was in blocking position. A limited search was conducted. By 0958 Tm M had discovered 5000 lbs of rice and had 35 VCS to be evacuated.

Dustoff was not accomplished for Tm I until 1022 almost two hours after it had been requested. Upon completion of Dustoff Tm I called in artillery as small arms and automatic weapons persisted. The artillery was lifted at 1058, and the light fire team followed by TAC air assaulted the area.

At 1102 Tm I requested a second dustoff. The second dustoff was completed at 1140. Tm I still had a KIA at its location as neither dustoff nor our light fire team could pick up the body. One of the aircraft from the 68th Airmobile support company finally evacuated the body. Tm M searching in the vicinity of its blocking position had uncovered a total of 9000 lbs of rice which was destroyed and 45 VCS. By 1147 Tm L had 50 VCS in the vicinity of its blocking position.

43 Infantry had completed a rather haphazard search of objective Alpha by 1020 hours. The Battalion Commander set his companies in position along Highway 2 and remained there for the rest of the operation. The search performed by the ARVN Force resulted in several burned huts. Nine VCS, some handgrenades of various manufacture, one anti-tank mine, and several pigs, chickens, bicycles and one sewing machine were taken by the 43 Infantry.

Feeling a more detailed search of objective Alpha was necessary at 1200 hours Tm I, Tm K and Tm L swiftly formed on line to the north of the objective and performed a mounted sweep of the area with one company of the 43 Infantry searching behind the vehicles. Artillery was employed during this search to fire into draws and thick jungle ahead of the search elements to drive out anybody hidden in such places.

This search revealed numerous tunnels, bunkers, booby traps, punji pits and firing positions. Four VC KIA were discovered and 140 more VCS were found. In addition rice, handgrenades and many uniforms were taken. The positions where KIA were found were entrenched and the enemy was killed at close range. There was one instance of an enemy assaulting two ACV's with a handgrenade at 15 meters.

At 1342 Tm K moved to objective Charlie and conducted a search that yielded 43 VCS.

A MEDCAP operation was conducted at the interrogation point. The operation met with only limited success as the people who had been evacuated to the interrogation point all demonstrated a reluctance to participate because of VC propaganda that discredited MEDCAP as dangerous and brutal. Attempts by S-5 to give away various foodstuffs was also only partly successful because the VC propaganda labeled the food as poison.

Because of approaching darkness and the time required to airlift the 43 Infantry to Ba Ria, Phase III, the search of objective Delta was never accomplished.

At 1612 hours Tm K returned 1-43 Infantry to the parent unit and moved north to secure route BLACK from the SP to the RP. Tm L moved north next on route BLACK and secured from the RP to YS458901. At 1658 hours two tanks of Tm L ran over pressure detonated mines at YS456844. No injuries were inflicted.

Tm I secured route BLACK from the southern sector of Tm L to the landing zone at YS456841. Tm M secured the landing zone until the 43 Infantry (ARVN) had been completely airlifted out of objective Alpha. At 1540 Howitzer Battery moved north and returned to the base camp at 1637. The 43 Infantry (ARVN) was clear of the LZ at 1640. Tm M moved north on route BLACK

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RVC: MACV J3-32)(Cont)

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One disappointment in the operation was with the performance of the 43 Infantry (ARVN). It was hoped that they would provide the task force with a capable means of conducting a detailed ground search of the objective areas. However, the ARVN Infantry troops lacked disciplined leadership and the conduct of the search was rapid and sloppy. Those areas that were searched were burned after the troops confiscated all pigs, chickens, bicycles, and other assorted items of value to them.

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It is hoped that another mission will be undertaken with the 43 Infantry and that through a more definitive command relationship more skillful teamwork can be formed.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS. See Annex B.

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ANNEX A to Combat Operations After Action Report to OP ALEXANDRIA.

TASK ORGANIZATION (Initially).

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Tn I

I/3-11 Armd Cav (-1 plat)
1/M/3-11 Armd Cav
1/FO/How/3-11 Armd Cav
1-M132

Tn L

L/3-11 Armd Cav
Lt Sec 3/M/3-11 Armd Cav
1 FO/How/3-11 Armd Cav
1 - M132

Tn K

K/3-11 Armd Cav
HV Sec 3/M/3-11 Armd Cav
1 Co/1-43 Inf (ARVN) (OPCON)
1 FO/How/3-11 Armd Cav
2 GVN National Police (OPCON)

Tn M

M/3-11 Armd Cav (-2 plat)
2/I/3-11 Armd Cav
1 FO/How/3-11 Armd Cav

TF CON

How Btry
Prov Mort Btry
3/919 Engr
1 Engr Recon Tm/27 Engr
Lt fire Tm/2-11 Armd Cav (OPCON)
MI Tm/11 Armd Cav
2 FO/How/3-11 Armd Cav

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LESSONS LEARNED OPERATION ALEXANDRIA

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1. ITEM: RECON BY FIRE

a. Discussion: Rather than random reconnaissance into heavily vegetated areas such as woodline, jungle or banana groves reconnaissance by fire should start short of the suspected area and be walked into the target.

b. Observation: Fire discipline and coordination exhibited by the enemy indicated that well conducted reconnaissance by fire can cause an enemy unit to reveal itself by return fire, or it will suppress his fire.

2. ITEM: FIRE DISCIPLINE

a. Discussion: When a team or a vehicle crew has more than one automatic weapon they should closely control their fire during enemy contact so that there is always at least one automatic weapon firing while the others reload.

b. Observation: Wounded personnel in OPERATION ALEXANDRIA indicated they were wounded because all automatic weapons ran out of ammo at the same time and the crew had no suppressive fire while they reloaded. This clearly dictates the need for control on firing automatic weapons.

3. ITEM: LAND NAVIGATION AT NIGHT

a. Discussion: Night movement under black out conditions can either achieve great surprise and success or create chaos. Surprise and success will be achieved if the following procedures are adopted.

(1) Know the distance between SP and objective and have the lead element measure the distance on his odometer to insure that the objective or turn off to the objective is found.

(2) Luminous compasses are valuable as an added reference for movement and to quickly determine general direction.

(3) Preplanned artillery concentrations utilizing WP are an important aid to determining exact location and achieving proper positioning on the objective area.

b. Observation: On OPERATION ALEXANDRIA the Third Squadron enjoyed a successful night movement by employing the procedures listed. It is recommended these considerations be SOP for movement during hours of darkness.

4. ITEM: CLOSING ON A KNOWN OR SUSPECTED ENEMY POSITION.

a. Discussion: When moving against a known or suspected enemy position armored vehicles should lead the dismounted elements so that any anti-personnel mines, booby traps or automatic weapons fire will be absorbed by the armor. Dismounted personnel can be utilized best by following behind to conduct a detailed search of the area, utilizing the protection of the armor and automatic weapons.

b. Observation: The combination of a mounted-dismounted team advancing on an enemy position proved effective in OPERATION ALEXANDRIA however greater speed and skill could be achieved if training were conducted in this procedure by ARVN units.

5. ITEM: DETECTING UNDERGROUND BUNKERS AND FIRING POSITIONS.

a. Discussion: On OPERATION ALEXANDRIA some underground bunkers and firing positions were detected by long mounds of earth. This was prevalent in banana grooves, and in most cases trenches, bunkers and firing positions were found under the mounds.

b. Observation: Search elements should be instructed concerning mounds and what they could indicate.

6. ITEM: ENEMY EMPLOYMENT OF PUNJII STICKS.

a. Discussion: Punjii stakes were found around an enemy defensive position. They were easily recognizable in the grass and the points were aiming away from the position.

b. Observation: Troops should be trained to look for punjii sticks and read into them what their employment could mean i.e. the direction they are pointing is expected route of friendly force advance. The opposite direction might hide an enemy position.

7. ITEM: EMPLOYMENT OF M-132

a. Discussion: For maximum utilization of the M-132 the following techniques were found to be most effective.

(1) Fire mixture short of target and allow the flame to roll into objective.

(2) Fire low when possible as the mixture will dissipate if fired higher than necessary.

ANNEX B to Combat Operations After Action Report to CP ALEXANDRIA (Cont)

b. Observation: Crews on M-132 should be trained in the techniques mentioned.

8. ITEM: ASSAULT ON LINE

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a. Discussion: At one point Tm I, Tm K and Tm L came on line to assault a wide area that contained enemy positions. With the help of an aerial observer 79 armored vehicles easily formed on line and advanced, all weapons trained on the enemy positions.

b. Observation: Armor can be employed successfully in mass formations in certain areas of Vietnam.

9. ITEM: CONTROL OF COMMAND NET.

a. Discussion: During the operation there were times when valuable transmissions had to compete for the opportunity to use the command net. Requests for dustoff were being cut out by spot reports which competed with commanders controlling air strikes. It was resolved to shift all air-mobile transmission to the admin/log net.

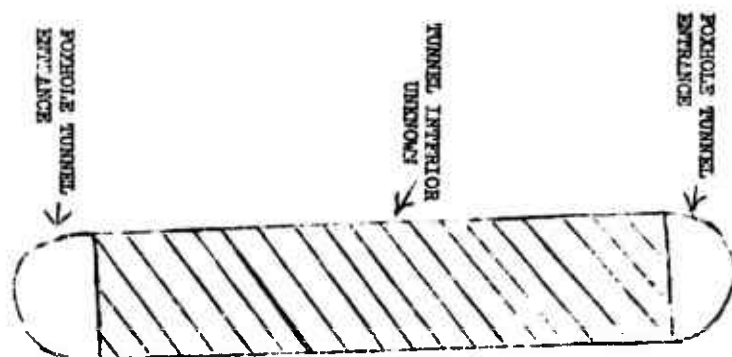
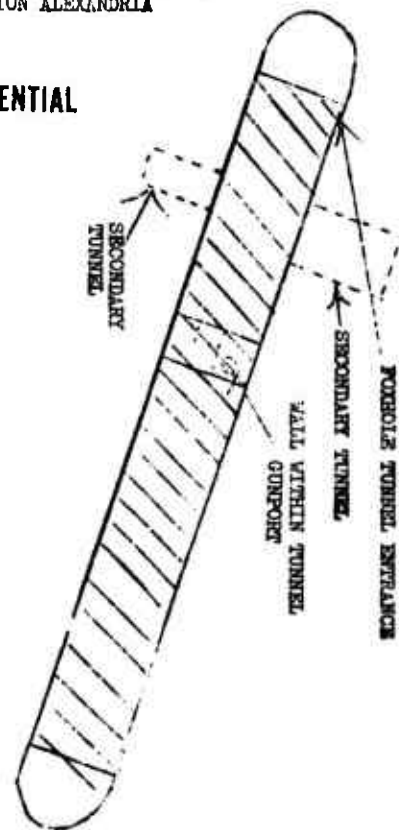
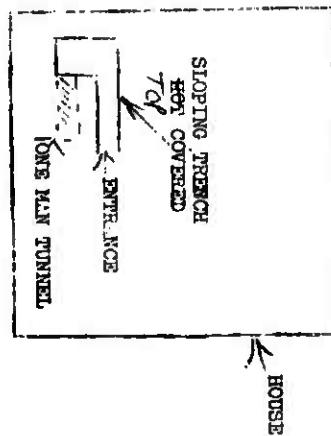
b. Observation: Airmobile communications may remain on the admin/log net to lessen transmissions on command net. Other suggestions include training people to listen before transmitting and firmly establishing their own priorities should important traffic be on the net.

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ANNEX C (Entrenchments Encountered on OPERATION ALEXANDRIA) to Combat Operations After Acti: Report to OPERATION ALEXANDRIA

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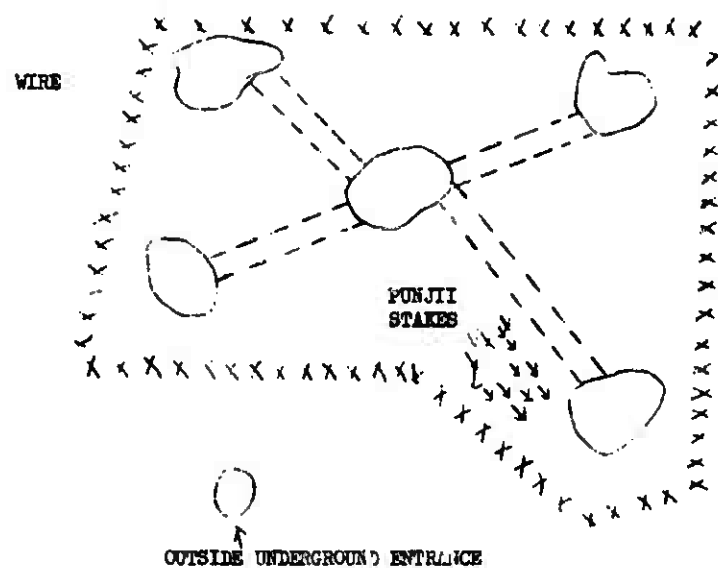


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ANNEX C (Entrenchments Encountered on OPERATION ALEXANDRIA) to Combat
Operations After Act 1: Report to OPERATION ALEXANDRIA

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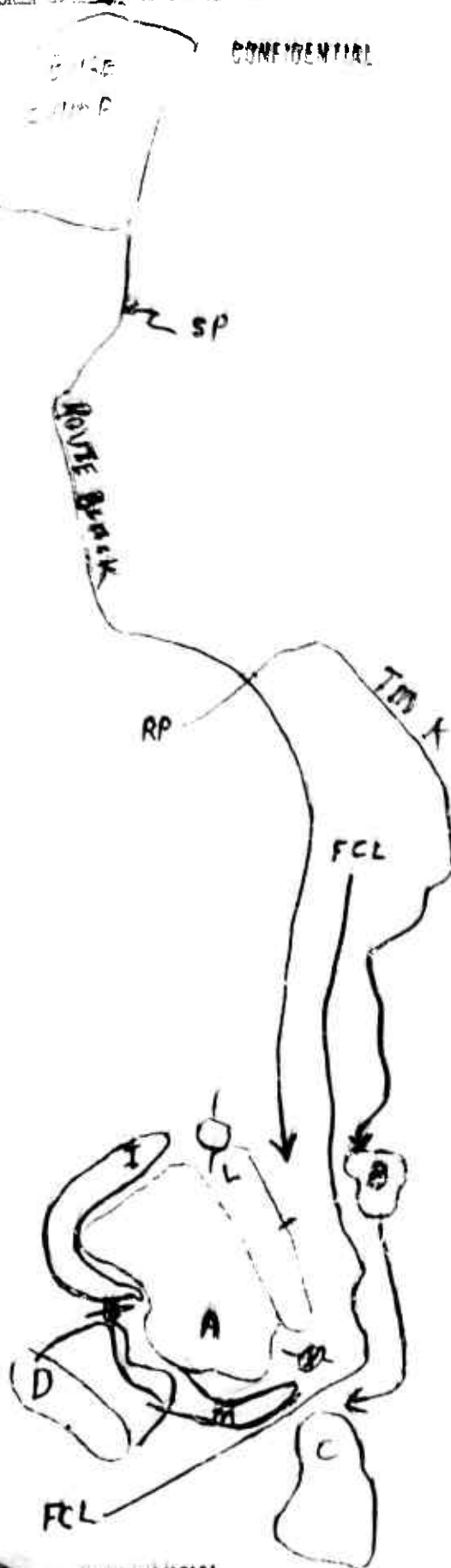
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ANNEX D

ROSTER OF COMMANDERS

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ANNEX D - Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation ATLANTA, Roster of Cmdrs.

11th Armored Cavalry Regiment - COL William W. Cobb

Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regt - CPT Marven L. Doerr

1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment - LTC Martin D. Howell

Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron - CPT Richard H. Fanning (20 Oct-23 Nov) 1LT Franklin F. Wing (24 Nov - 8 Dec)

Troop A, 1st Squadron - CPT John E. Bailey

Troop B, 1st Squadron - CPT John L. Landry

Troop C, 1st Squadron - CPT Robert W. Garrett Jr.

Company D, 1st Squadron - CPT Bill Peasley

Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron - CPT William K. Fraase

2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment - LTC Kibbey M. Horne

Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron - CPT Bob E. Shamberger

Troop E, 2nd Squadron - CPT Richard M. Miller

Troop F, 2nd Squadron - CPT Howard C. Batt

Troop G, 2nd Squadron - CPT Olan J. Thorsen

Company H, 2nd Squadron - CPT John G. Russell

Howitzer Battery, 2nd Squadron - CPT William R. Perry

3rd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment - LTC Palmer A. Peteracn

Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3rd Squadron - CPT Calvin J. Reese (20Oct-6Dec)
CPT Tedd A. Welsh (6Dec-8Dec)

Troop I, 3rd Squadron - CPT Peter P. Horoschak (20 Oct - 9 Nov)
CPT Joel R. Parker (10 Nov - 8 Dec)

Troop K, 3rd Squadron - CPT Wayne P. Halstead

Troop L, 3rd Squadron - CPT Larry L. Mengel

Company M, 3rd Squadron - CPT Herbert C. Hertel Jr.

Howitzer Battery, 3rd Squadron - CPT Leonard Deege

37th Medical Company - CPT Dennis J. Blais

919th Engineer Company (Armored) - CPT Donald J. Crocker

409th Radio Research Detachment - CPT Lee Gentry

51st Military Intelligence Detachment - CPT Alfred J. Diraka (20 Oct - 18 Nov)
MAJ Cornelius L. Gray (19 Nov & 8 Dec)

33rd Chemical Detachment - 1LT James T. Price

17th Public Information Detachment - MAJ Paul Blackwell (20 Oct - 7 Dec)
CPT Owen Ditchfield (8 Dec)

28th Military History Detachment - MAJ Bruce R. Nilsson

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ANNEX F

VIET CONG INCIDENT REPORTS

26 MAY 1964 - 3 OCTOBER 1966

Annex F to Combat Operations After Action Report to Operation ATLANTA

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1. (C) INCIDENTS: BIEN HOA to XUAN LOC on/near National Highway One.

DATE	COORDINATES	INCIDENT
26 May 64	YT 177126	Ambush of RVNAF personnel.
6 Jul 64	YT 464112	Ambush of Civil Officials.
30 Mar 66	YT 452128	Ambush of RF personnel.
2 Jun 66	YT 241108	Roadblocks and mines, small arms.
13 Jun 66	YT 295058	Mine.
3 Jul 66	YT 3310	Roadblock.
7 Jul 66	YT 389101	Small arms.
Jul 66	YT 450101	Small arms.
12 Aug 66	YT 343101	Small arms.
14 Aug 66	YT 495056	Roadblock, Small arms.
19 Aug 66	YT 343102	Small arms.
6 Sep 66	YT 270100	Possible extortion point.
6 Sep 66	YT 344100	Booby-trapped roadblock.
13 Sep 66	YT 272092	Train mined.

2. (C) INCIDENTS: XUAN LOC to PHUOC LE (BARIA) on Routes 1 and 2.

9 Jun 64	YS 407638	PF Mil pers ambush - 6 KIA, 5 WIA.
9 Jun 64	YS 427644	RF Mil pers ambush - 3 KIA
No Ambushes 9 Jun 64 thru April 66		
No Info April 66 thru 3 June 66		
4 Jun 66	YS 460830	Small arms.
4 Jun 66	YS 462817	AT mine found - destroyed in place over 1/2 mi long - not clear.
4 Jun 66	YS 463820	Roadblock, dirt mounds, cuts.
30 Jun 66	YS 438914	Road cut - passable.
1 Jul 66	YS 460839	Small arms.
5 Jul 66	YS 454853	3 mines-1 APC-1 1/2 ton damaged.
10 Aug 66	YS 458840	Road reported mined.
	YS 454863	
13 Aug 66	YS 458889	Road cut.
13 Aug 66	YS 464795	Road cut.
13 Aug 66	YS 464796	Roadblock with poss wons plt.
13 Aug 66	YS 445970	Road cut.
13 Aug 66	YS 439914	Road cut.
13 Aug 66	YS 448978	Tree over road-held up traffic.
20 Aug 66	YS 431940	Dirt mound across road, and just off road.
20 Aug 66	YS 430937	One dirt mound each side.
20 Aug 66	YS 435916	Crater in road.
20 Aug 66	YS 430939	Dirt road block.
20 Aug 66	YS 445790	Deep trench across road.
23 Aug 66	YS 443914	Two trees across road.
23 Aug 66	YS 455850	Crater in road.
23 Aug 66	YS 455840	2 brushwood roadblocks-100m apart.
23 Aug 66	YS 457844	Barbed wire barrier.
26 Aug 66	YS 458833	Mine, hit by truck.
26 Aug 66	YS 454854	Mine, hit by truck.
26 Aug 66	YS 454854	APC, hits mine.
26 Aug 66	YS 465876	Jesp, hits mine.
27 Aug 66	YS 453862	Numerous but passable cuts.
	YS 455871	
28 Aug 66	YS 455907	APC destroyed by mine.
28 Aug 66	YS 458898	Truck hit mine.
29 Aug 66	YS 459900	ARVN APC damaged by mine.
2 Sep 66	YS 448978	Command estimated mine.
2 Sep 66	YS 425647	U/I explosion, small arms.
4 Sep 66	YS 432940	Mine.
5 Sep 66	YS 437919	Small arms.
3 Oct 66	YS 454865	Two road cuts.

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